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*Impressions
and
Recollections*

*Brig.-General
F.P. Crozier*
C.B., G.M.G., D.S.O.

AUTHOR OF
"A BRASS HAT
IN NO MANS LAND"



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IMPRESSIONS
&
RECOLLECTIONS





THE AUTHOR IN 1924.

IMPRESSIONS AND RECOLLECTIONS

BY
BRIG.-GENERAL F. P. CROZIER
C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.

AUTHOR OF "A BRASS HAT IN NO MAN'S LAND"



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IMPRESSIONS AND RECOLLECTIONS

CHAPTER I

EARLY DAYS

My childhood was spent in much the same manner as the early lives of most children of army officers are passed. There was a complete absence of ostentation, a great pride of country and of the Empire and, of course, a high regard for the Fighting Services in which our ancestors had served for generations. As was inevitable, I came home from India in an old trooper to live with my mother's married sister in Ireland and to begin my education while my parents remained in India. My aunt's husband had been a cavalry soldier and had kept in touch with the 12th Lancers after his very early retirement, so it came about that during the happy years I spent at Oatlands, Castleknock, County Dublin, I retained my childish touch with military atmosphere and at the same time became absorbed in Irish affairs, as overheard whilst listening to the conversations of my elders. My grandfather, Major Percy, who served in the 9th Foot in the Crimea, was Resident Magistrate at Portumna in County Galway, and had therefore been under constant protection of the R.I.C. owing to the Clanricarde troubles. My great-great-uncle, Sam Hussey, a well-known land agent in Munster and one of the best hated men in Ireland at that time, was being constantly blown up or shot at, while a cousin, Peter

FitzGerald, who often came to stay with us, was also a land agent in the troubled province. The tragic and dastardly Phoenix Park murders of 1882 had also taken place within a short distance of the house, and every time I was taken into Dublin on the car (not a motor-car, modern readers, please!) the exact spots (which are visible to-day) where Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke were done to death used to be pointed out to me. In addition to other Irish matters I speedily became acquainted with the Orange Question, as our cowman, Fullerton by name, was an Orangeman, who hailed from north of the Boyne. On 12th July he used to don his Orange sash before going to some meeting or other, when he paraded in front of me with great pride for inspection.

My acquaintance with the R.I.C. came very early in life.

At Oatlands we had a stone wall which contained "Irish diamonds," a glistening strata of some value which used to be made up into cheap jewellery. This wall used to be knocked down from time to time, on which occasions the assistance of the police was called in. We were all a very happy party in that peaceful Irish home—peaceful in the midst of political discord—and certainly Fullerton, the Orange cowman, and O'Leary, the Galway coachman, who had driven my R.M. grandfather for years, and whose mutton-chop whiskers and cockade I can visualize to-day, appeared to sink their religious and political differences in the melting-pot of loyal service to a considerate master and mutual friend.

I well remember my first big children's party at the time about which I am writing. I was going to this children's party at the Viceregal Lodge, then occupied by the Lord-Lieutenant, Earl Spencer, who was a man much detested by a certain section of Irish life. Lord Spencer had a very difficult task to perform. While, of course, supporting the Home Rule policy of Mr. Gladstone, he was responsible for the maintenance of law and order in Ireland,

and had, of course, to confirm the death sentences and enforce the various measures which had been specially passed for the "benefit" of Ireland. I had heard a lot of talk at the time, both in the dining-room and in the stable-yard, about Irish affairs. The house of my great-great-uncle, Sam Hussey, Edinburn, County Kerry, had been blown up by dynamite on November 28th, 1884, which set a few of my relations mad with rage.

On the other hand the coachman, O'Leary, was known to sing a song about Lord Spencer, whom he called "Foxy Jack," and whom he assured me would some day be "hung up to a sour apple tree" for hanging good Irishmen. When I told O'Leary I was going to the party at the Viceregal Lodge he said, "Ah, well; I suppose I'll be drivin' ye to the divil himself, but in case ye come back mind ye have a good look at him and tell me if he's as foxy as his name says."

In due course the great evening arrived and I attended the party, which was a fancy-dress one, rigged out as Mephistopheles. When O'Leary saw me from the box seat of the brougham he nearly had convulsions, as only an Irishman with a sense of humour can, and muttered something about being "a pair of 'em" (meaning Lord Spencer and myself). My aunt, who accompanied me, was waiting to pay her respects to their Excellencies, all being silent save for the calling out of names by an A.D.C., when a shrill voice, belonging to me, rose above the occasion with the inquisitive demand, "Lil, which is Foxy Jack?" My poor aunt almost sank into the ground—I expect she wished she could have—but fortunately I was so small and hidden that few save those in my immediate vicinity knew who the culprit was.

To those of my generation, I suppose, the year 1887 was an Imperial landmark; at least it was to me, not without cause.

I had travelled over to London that year alone, in

charge of the stewardess of a North Wall boat, at the age of seven. At Holyhead I was handed over to the care of the guard of the train, being met at Euston by a devoted father, who had not seen me for several years, and who had come home from Burma in order to present the Jubilee gift of the women of Burma to Queen Victoria at Windsor. I well remember this meeting with my father, as I had never seen him in a top-hat and frock-coat before. He carried me on his shoulder to a hansom and drove me to the United Services Hotel, long since demolished, which stood where His Majesty's Theatre now stands. I had, perhaps, never seen a hansom before, and the little arcade beside the hotel, which runs from Charles Street to Pall Mall, and which still exists, thrilled me with delight. Next morning I demanded a hoop, to trundle at top speed up and down this arcade, an idea which greatly shocked my venerable grandfather, my father's father, who was one of the old school, who are now, alas, almost no longer.

I greatly delighted in driving to the Levée with my grandfather, who appeared to my youthful eyes to be a mass of gold lace, togged out as he was as a senior Indian Civil Servant, and my father, who looked resplendent in the full dress uniform of the Royal Scots Fusiliers. As I waited for them with an aunt in an open Victoria quite close to the courtyard of the Palace of St. James, my youthful eyes fell on the greatest Imperial sight which had ever been witnessed up to that time in London. The Dominion of Canada, India and the Colonies had all sent representatives to present good wishes to the Queen-Empress on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of her reign. These representatives now passed before my eyes in full uniform to pay homage to the son of the Queen-Empress, who was acting on her behalf, and among them were my father and his father. It was a great Imperial lesson for me, which I hope I shall never forget. I can well remember my

aunt telling me, as she pointed out some Canadian and Australian officers, that troops from those parts of the Empire had taken part in the operations in the Sudan two years previously.

Little did I imagine at the time that twelve years later I would be fighting for the Queen in South Africa shoulder to shoulder with men from all parts of her great demesne. The presentation of gifts to the Queen-Empress in Windsor Park was also a great day for me. I was naturally very disappointed that Her Majesty was clad in widow's garments instead of in her robes and crown, and that the gentlemen present wore mufti, but the fact that my father should have been permitted to present the gift from Burma in person far outweighed other considerations.

In due course my father returned to India and I to Ireland to continue my studies. As is customary with the Irish "gentry" I was sent to school in England, first of all to a small private establishment and then to a public school. Although this small school, which was presided over by two maiden ladies, could only muster a membership of some fifty boys, yet it is surprising that several members of Mr. Baldwin's last cabinet should have been there. Winston Churchill was very much there, his father being the means of providing a special half-holiday occasionally, which was procured, as a rule, at the instigation of Winston, who, in his turn, had perhaps been "advised" to see to it that a "half" was granted—"or——!" Walter Guinness and his brother Ernest, the brewer, were also at this dame's school before they went to Eton.

I used to travel back to Dublin in the care of Ernest for a time. I have never seen him since, but when I was in command in Ireland in 1921 he sent me an old photograph of a school group in which we both figured. Mr. Amery, I have been told, was also at this school, but I have no recollection of him. Others who were there were

Chappell, of Chappells' music, who eventually commanded the K.D.G.'s, and Christopher Wren, a direct descendant of the architect. At that time I was very small for my age. Most of my holidays used to be spent in Limerick and at Valencia, as my aunt had married again. In this connection it is interesting to note that three of my mother's sisters married officers in the 12th Lancers, Leslie Martin, Dick Malone and George Barry.

Two of my best school chums at that time were Donough O'Brien, a son of the late Lord Inchiquin, and Tommy Coke, a son of the late Earl of Leicester. We used to spend the day passing through London, on our way to Ireland, with Coke, while part or some of the holidays I usually spent at Dromoland Castle with O'Brien.

It was at Dromoland that dear old Lord Inchiquin gave me a cigar to smoke, which completely laid me out for a whole day, and effectually put a stop to any desires I might have entertained in the direction of pipe or cigarette smoking. It was at Limerick that I went through the agony of the demented every Sunday of every holidays, which made me regard church-going as equally abhorrent as a visit to the dentist. It is amazing, but none the less true, that every Sunday I used to be made to wear an Eton suit and top-hat, and to walk about a mile to church through a poor class area of the city of Limerick, where very small boys in very large top-hats, white collars, Eton jackets and long trousers were unknown. Rude remarks, such as, "Come out from under the hat," used to be shouted after me, to the amusement of my uncle-in-law, Peter FitzGerald. I cannot imagine that my church-going did me much good, knowing, as I did, while listening to the sermon, that sooner or later I had to face the music again, for, quite rightly, no horses being allowed out on Sunday, we had to walk.

I used to go to all sorts of places with Peter FitzGerald in those days. Sometimes it would be to a

meet of the Limerick hounds; sometimes to the theatre, when a travelling burlesque company might happen to be playing, and at other times to some official inquiry into the affairs of the River Shannon Fishery Board or some such authority. It was at a Fishery Board inquiry that I first set eyes on John Redmond, and I well remember the great man, for great he undoubtedly was to be, asking Peter FitzGerald if he was a member of the Limerick Fishery "Bourd," in his strong, rich brogue. It used to be the great thing for those sitting in "The Gods" at the theatre to "call the Grand Jury." When a member of the Grand Jury entered the stalls his name would be called by somebody who would accurately copy the voice of the Clerk to the Grand Jury, his answer being accurately copied by somebody else in "The Gods," to the amusement of all.

As time went on, after I had entered Wellington, my summer holidays used to be spent in Ireland and my Christmas vacation in Scotland. The place where I spent my Scottish vacations is so unique as to be worthy of description. It is the only place that I know of in the Kingdom which has remained unchanged by the passing of time. I first went there in 1892.

The reason for this rare conservatism is probably to be found in the fact that the people who matter there have not changed at all, except by getting a little, but only a very little, older.

Mrs. Platt, who owns the place and is over eighty years old, still goes North in August and comes South in February, as she did when I went there first as a boy of ten. Her head stalker, Murdo, is almost the same to-day as he was some fifty years ago in Mrs. Platt's service. With him I killed my first hind at the age of fourteen and my first stag four years later. With him I "murdered" my first white hare in 1893 or thereabouts, and with him I first shot a grouse and woodcock. Mrs. Platt still stalks

with Murdo, still kills her stags and hinds, still dawdles about before going out in the morning, still dawdles when on the hill, and still resolutely dawdles about coming back at night in time for dinner.

The late Lord Leverhulme once told me that she was the most wonderful woman he had ever met. He had good cause to know, as this wonderful place which Mrs. Platt owns is in the Island of Lewis. There more mixed sport can be obtained than in most places. I suppose the sea-trout fishing is the best in Scotland. It must be good, as even I can catch a heavy basket of fish there. Over a hundred stags a year are killed, while the hind stalking is equally good. Though the grouse shooting is not nearly as good as when I was a boy, the woodcock shooting is first class. Wildfowl, snipe, plover, seals are all apt to show up suddenly to add to a mixed bag, while for real excitement I commend the local otter hunt. There they hunt the otter with a "Bobbery pack" of terriers and shoot him on sight, the lochs being too big to do otherwise. Collapsible boats are often employed on these occasions. I do not know in which direction lies the greater amount of excitement on these hunting days—killing the otter or avoiding being killed by someone else's gun. For all that it is great fun, and when it is recollected that these hunts are directed by a lady of over eighty years of age it is amazing.

In 1896 I suffered a great disappointment. In that year I was definitely and finally informed that I was neither tall enough nor heavy enough to enter the Army. In vain did I point out Lord Roberts and assert that he was shorter than was I. However, I did what I could to work off my military ardour by taking a commission in the old 4th Middlesex Rifle Volunteer Corps, now the 13th Kensingtons. For many years I had listened to argument after argument on military subjects, the chief of which were "Is war a science or an art?"; "What about

Ireland? ”; “When will the South African War break out? ”

As regards the first question, owing to the efforts made by Lord Wolseley to create a real, live, highly-organized army, military men were just beginning to learn that there was more in soldiering than shouting orders and shooting fairly straight, and that whether war was a science or an art it was one of those things about which men are never done learning.

As regards Ireland things were different. Here was a purely partisan question. People used to take sides about it from the point of view of their politics, or their pockets. I was, of course, by tradition a Unionist, and a very conservative one at that, because my Irish connection made that inevitable, and also because the Burrards, my father's mother's family, had represented Toryism in the House of Commons for many generations without a break. I have since learnt what I did not then know, as I had nobody to tell me, namely, that the workers who came to the fore through the industrial revolution made, on the whole, hard masters, who often climbed into County and London society through the instrumentality of the Primrose League. It seems that the less ostentatious of these successful workers became Liberals and worked for what *they* thought to be best, while the more ambitious became Tories and climbed the dazzling heights with great difficulty, in order to attain what *they* thought to be best. As a lad of my generation had no chance of thinking for himself, the inevitable result was that everything was taken for granted, Ireland included.

As regards South Africa I was on surer ground. My father had a brother-officer, Captain Thorneycroft by name, now my stepfather, who was a very great friend of my mother. He had served in the Zulu War with the 21st (Royal Scots Fusiliers) and in the first Boer War of 1881. He was obsessed with the idea that the South

African War could not be long delayed after the unsuccessful Jameson Raid, and he was right. He talked of little else. The Jameson Raid had made a profound impression on my young mind. I listened to every word of the trial of the ringleaders and to much of Cecil Rhodes' evidence at the inquiry.

In 1898 I left England for Ceylon, where I intended to become a tea-planter. During the interval between September, 1898, and October, 1899, I read a great deal more about the coming South African War in letters from my mother, who was seeing a great deal of Captain Thorneycroft at the time, so the outbreak itself came as no surprise to me.

I spent a little over a year in Ceylon. I went to "creep," as learning is called in the language of planters, with a most adorable Scotsman, named Keith Rollo, on an estate called Wana Rajah. I very much doubt if there ever lived a whiter man than Keith, and when I have said that I have said all. Mrs. Rollo was also a very good friend to me, and really treated me like one of the family. There was a daughter, too.

I have never visited Ceylon since I left there to go to the South African War, much as I have often wished to do so. With the advent of motor-cars no doubt things are much changed, but it might be of some interest to the "creepers" of to-day to know what we did thirty years ago.

I suppose to-day the tom-tom wakes the rather-unwilling-to-rise young man, as it used to wake me in those far-off days. A "lick and a promise," followed by a dash into one's clothes and a rush down to "muster," when the duties of the day were told off rather on the Army system, began the day's work at dawn. While the coolies were getting on to their ground the "creeper" had returned to his bungalow for breakfast, after which he went out, generally to the "plucking." It is rather a long time ago since I supervised a gang, but I believe we used to "pick out,"

that is to say, get rid of coarse leaf and "weigh up" three times a day, after which the leaf was carried down to the factory. We came in about midday for tiffin, and woe betide him who drank beer at that meal, as, if he did, he surely went to sleep afterwards and had the greatest difficulty in waking up again, for work had to be faced once more soon after two o'clock. By about five o'clock work was over for the day, after which a game of tennis concluded the hours of daylight. Race meetings, tennis tournaments and dances added to the amusements of the year, while a Masonic Lodge at Hatton permitted some of the benedicts to get away from home for a time.

Keith Rollo was a great sportsman. He kept a pack of hounds, with which he used to hunt the hare rather as we used to hunt the otter in the Lews, by shooting him at sight. This method, which at first blush seems crude, and even unsporting, was inevitable, as, owing to the steepness of the hills, hounds could seldom, if ever, achieve a kill alone and unaided. We used to be posted at likely spots along the paths which ran along the hill-sides in order to shoot the hare as he crossed the open. When Rollo met me at Hatton station he spotted my gun-case and was delighted, so I had made a good start.

A man who had "crept" with Rollo, just prior to my arrival, was Sir Frederick Sykes, now Governor of Bombay. I met him once or twice in Ceylon, and later sat next to him at a crammer's in Earl's Court, when we were both working for the Staff College. He had joined the 15th Hussars during the South African War and achieved fame in the air during the Great War. I always connect Sykes and Rollo together, owing to a story which the latter used to tell at the expense of the former, when the former was a very humble individual in Ceylon. Sykes was quite young in those days and, for all I know, romantic. There was a very good-looking married woman, the wife of a planter, to whom another planter used to pay great

attention. Rollo, Sykes and two others were playing whist one night (it was before the days of bridge), when the conversation turned on to this matrimonial tangle.

“ Well,” said Sykes, “ if I was —— ” (mentioning the name of the husband) “ I would shoot myself.”

“ Would you, you —— young ass? ” retorted dear old Keith in his best Scotch, “ I’d shoot the other —— ! ”

I do not know if they have hectic nights in Ceylon still, but the outcome of the Up-country *v.* Colombo football match or that of Dickoya *v.* Kandy used to be, as a rule, disastrous. I have a butterfly on my left arm which I obtained at Colombo on one of those occasions, and, shame to say, I have no idea how I got it, when I got it or who paid for it. It merely arrived.

I secured a billet at Kandy in 1899, which I kept till November of that year, when I learnt that the former occupant was coming back. I immediately confided in my old chief, Keith Rollo, that I wanted to go to the South African War to pick up a regular commission, and asked him to see me through, which he did.

CHAPTER II

FIGHTING IN NATAL

WHEN I left Ceylon in a small steamer of the "Um" line for South Africa I was close on twenty-one years of age.

As things are to-day, boys of that age are much more advanced than they were when I left Colombo hurriedly for the War. To-day they know more of the material side of life. Then, I, at any rate, thought of the present and nothing much else.

That was my training, and so far as the present was concerned it was truly all absorbing. The good name of the British Empire was at stake; a handful of truculent farmers had defied the Queen, and out of it I saw an opening to acquire that which nature and stupid regulations had denied me—the Queen's commission.

Those were my thoughts when I went on board a small steamer at Point de Galle and asked the captain if he would sign me on as one of the crew, as the agent had informed me all the cabin accommodation had been booked up. I was taken on the strength of the ship as a cook, for the privilege of which I paid a first-class fare, slept on deck and washed out of a bucket, yet I was lucky to get away at all.

Needless to say I had a plan in my mind. My mother's great friend, Major Thorneycroft (he had not long been promoted), had sailed for Durban from England as a Special Service officer for service on Sir George White's staff. As Sir George, owing to having been cut off in Ladysmith, could not be reached by the time the Major arrived in the country, I knew I should be able to get in touch with him.

There were several officers on board who were

rejoining their regiments, among them Tilney, a Hussar, and McCauley of the Loyal North Lincs., who was killed shortly after his arrival in Africa. In addition to the soldiers there were several planters on board, some of whom were also out to get commissions, and one Dan Driscoll from Burma.

I suppose Driscoll would have then been called a Soldier of Fortune, but whatever he was called he was a very good soldier. He was at the time a captain in the Burma Volunteers. He used to lecture us on board on the care of horses, trekking and the like, while at other times we would throw empty bottles over the stern for him to pick off with a revolver, he being an extremely good shot, while we practised ourselves.

On arrival at Durban Driscoll was very badly snubbed by the Base Commandant. He reported himself for duty in accordance with some paragraph of Queen's Regulations and was politely told to go to some other place. Nothing daunted he enlisted, and eventually raised a corps of scouts, called after him, being subsequently awarded a D.S.O. and the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. After the South African War Driscoll raised the Legion of Frontiersmen, out of which a battalion of the Royal Fusiliers was formed for service in East Africa during the Great War, which he, of course, commanded.

Times have changed, and one can hardly imagine a very good, keen, patriotic Colonial soldier, holding the King's Colonial Commission, being now snubbed by a base commandant under circumstances such as Driscoll encountered at Durban fifteen years before the Great War. Yet soldiers are sometimes peculiar people. In 1914 and 1915 the Territorials were frequently snubbed or looked down on by the Regulars in France, while in 1915 the Regulars and the Territorials did precisely the same thing to the New Armies. It was not till 1916, when Regulars, Terriers and Kitchener's men had begun to be

killed by the same shells in the same battles and to be thankful for small mercies, and until Kitchener's men had frequently beaten Regulars and Terriers in the field of sport, that a general level out took place.

I still held my commission in the Volunteers in England when I arrived in Durban, but as I looked so absurdly young—most people took me for seventeen—I decided not to mention the fact.

The voyage to Durban was uneventful, and was principally noticeable for the fact that we drank the ship dry.

My luck was in from the outset, as, shortly after disembarkation at Durban, I read a recruiting poster, which stated that Colonel Thorneycroft required a hundred more men to form a new company for the mounted infantry regiment which he commanded and which bore his name. I immediately telegraphed to the Colonel, who was at the front, saying I had arrived from Ceylon with three other planters and that I was going to enlist next morning at the race-course, where the riding test was held. I did this because I knew the Colonel knew that riding, owing to the disgraceful neglect of my education as a boy in Ireland, was not my strong point. I think every boy should be taught to ride if possible. I do not know why I was not, as I had lived among horses in Ireland, as a child, for twelve years. Thanks to this neglect of this very important part of my education, I nearly lost my life in February, 1900, during the final stages of the Relief of Ladysmith. I got through the riding test as best I could, and within a few days found myself at Frere camp, south of the River Tugela, where we were inspected by Colonel Thorneycroft. We just missed the reverse at Colenso and things were looking none too good, but my two friends and I had become complete private soldiers, that is to say we had lost all our individuality. One thing, patriotism, we knew we possessed; the other, courage, we hoped to achieve; beyond that nothing

much mattered. For me things were slightly different. My lack of knowledge of riding, grooming, horsemastership and ability to improvise or make the best of things all confronted me as a colossal obstacle to be overcome. Hard-bitten Colonial troopers, used to being in the saddle all day long, have not much patience with a new and inexperienced hand, but for all that some of them were very good to me and helped me out of many difficulties.

A few days after I joined T.M.I., which is the short for Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry, I paraded in front of the Commanding Officer and was promoted corporal. This was a kindly and considerate act on his part, as by it I avoided the carrying of heavy oat sacks on my back, which I do not really think my strength would have enabled me to do, as I was very light—an ideal mounted infantry weight, in fact, riding, as I did, well under nine stone. My promotion caused me to be placed in charge of a tent in which were my three planter friends, a London solicitor, a bank clerk from Durban, a butcher from Smithfield market, a Jew from the Rand, an American adventurer, who died a glorious death later in defence of an isolated post, two transport riders from Rhodesia and an English actor, who had been stranded while on tour. As I was drawing six shillings a day pay, with rations, I was quite well off, and eventually enlisted the services of the butcher to help me to look after my horse and kit.

I was on detachment at Spearman's Hill in January, 1900, when the 2nd Royal Scots Fusiliers, my father's old regiment, in the 2nd battalion of which I had spent part of my childhood, marched into camp.

It so happened that I was corporal of the guard at the time and ordered my men to turn out and present arms to the old battalion, riding at the head of which, behind the C.O., was Captain Amyatt Hull, whom I knew well, and who, fifteen years later, was a Brigadier with me in the 4th Division in France. I knew most of the officers of the

2nd battalion at that time, as my Colonel, who was my mother's great friend, was a captain in the battalion at Chatham in 1898.

After I came off duty I went over to see Captain Hull and the officers whom I knew, which was, I suppose, most irregular but at the same time comforting, as I procured a whisky and soda and some Egyptian cigarettes. I was not to see the battalion at close quarters again till it came under my command for a few days during a very critical period in the history of the Empire in April, 1918, during the battle of the Lys, when I was placed in command of all front-line troops in a certain forward area.

No officer can possibly realize the lack of interest which the private soldier displays in the "big ideas" of a commander unless he has been a private himself. The cleaning of arms, ammunition and equipment, the care of the horse, the drudgery of fatigues and working parties confront him and he does them. The variation of his diet interests him at the time, and a dry bed (or a soft one, if he can get it) appeals to him much; beyond that nothing matters. He marches, counter-marches, deploys, goes into action, comes out of it and then does the hundred and one things which soldiers do collectively without question. It is the only way; if it were otherwise, battles could never be fought or wars waged.

It was in this frame of mind that the soldiers of T.M.I. found themselves on the top of Spion Kop on January 24th, 1900. Why they went there they neither knew nor cared. Obviously it had something to do with the Relief of Ladysmith; everything had. Obviously they were meant to thrash the Boers and drive them back. Obviously, when they were sent to the top of the hill, they were intended by those who sent them there to stay there and not withdraw, otherwise they would never have been sent. That was the reasoning of the private soldier. It so happened that when the Infantry Brigade, commanded

by Major-General Woodgate, and T.M.I., commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Thorneycroft, came into action on top of the hill (they had got there unmolested), General Woodgate, who was in chief command, was almost immediately killed. A pitched battle ensued, during which the casualties were heavy, T.M.I. losing eighteen officers killed and wounded, my Captain (Knox-Gore) being among the former.

The ebb and flow of battle is always uncertain. At one minute things may appear to be going well on one flank, while on the other things may seem to be going all wrong. In one small pocket the enemy may look like succeeding; in another he is obviously vanquished. In other words local failures or successes never reflect the position of the whole. For this reason all soldiers are taught and ordered to hold out at all costs, at all times, in periods of stress. If this simple rule is obeyed by every single man in battle there can only be one of two results, victory or an honourable defeat, represented by a heaped-up mass of dead British soldiers. Any other result is bound to be wrong, unless, and until, the General in supreme command decides for reasons best known to himself to break off the battle or manœuvre for position. It was so at Le Cateau in 1914.

As is usual in battles, there was considerable local confusion on the top of Spion Kop as that fatal day in January, 1900, wore on. Some men of a British regiment had hoisted a white flag of surrender, which was, of course, not only a wrong thing to do, but positively dangerous. Colonel Thorneycroft showed great personal bravery on this occasion, and not only restored confidence by the unstinting exposure of his body to the enemy, but actually put the Boers back to their position and lowered the white flag.

In the meantime Colonel Crofton, who had succeeded to the chief command on top of the hill on the death of the General, by virtue of seniority, sent a signal message to General Buller, the Commander-in-Chief, acquainting him

of the position. This message was received by General Buller as reading "Send reinforcements. All is lost," or words to that effect. General Buller, on reading this message, rightly came to the conclusion that the Colonel commanding at the top of the hill had lost his head and signalled back, "I must have a fighting commander on top of the hill, so appoint Colonel Thorneycroft to the command, with the local rank of Brigadier-General," or words to that effect. Brigadier-General Thorneycroft thereupon assumed command. Late that night Thorneycroft ordered the abandonment of the position. The reader will ask why the order to abandon the hill was given, as the result of this abandonment frustrated General Buller's efforts to relieve Ladysmith and almost led to the surrender of that garrison.

Colonel Crofton, who was said to have sent the "All is lost" message, denied the correctness of the wording received by General Buller, and said he had not sent the important words which General Buller rightly objected to.

As the signalling regulations had not been complied with by anybody on Spion Kop, no copy of this important message having been handed in, kept, or filed, the matter could not be cleared up.

It was, however, a question which did not affect the issue regarding the abandonment of the position, save that Colonel Crofton argued that *he* would never have abandoned, although he might have been driven out. Lord Roberts, while being perfectly fair to Colonel Thorneycroft in regard to the valour shown by him earlier in the day, held him guilty of "unwarrantable assumption of command." Colonel Thorneycroft's explanation, which took the form of a written report, cannot, or could not, be taken seriously by any thinking soldier, as he gave want of artillery support, ammunition, water and rations as some of the reasons for his abandonment of the key position. British

soldiers have often, unfortunately, been let down in regard to their supply of artillery, ammunition, water and rations, but that shortage has not, and cannot ever be, admitted as a reason for going back. During the war in France I invariably gave the example of Spion Kop to my Colonels as the thing above all others not to do. General Buller, white man as he was, upheld Colonel Thorneycroft, whom he had personally appointed over the heads of others to the command on the top of the hill. His was a "magnificent gesture," but it was not war, neither was it good soldiering.

It has been said that no man is a hero to his own valet. It is equally true, I think, that no general or colonel is a hero to his own orderly. Nevertheless I was and still am very proud of my old Colonel, who was a good soldier. He had not seen very much war service, but he knew the Boers as well as anybody else who had taken part in the war of 1881. He was very fond of amateur theatricals, shooting and theatre-going, while rackets probably interested him as much as musketry, yet he knew the customs of the service in the field. How was it then that he came to abandon this position just at the time when he had beaten the Boers, although he did not know it? The enemy actually abandoned their side of the hill as Thorneycroft abandoned his.

I had a long talk with Colonel Thorneycroft at his bivouac at the foot of the hill after he had had time to have a wash, a feed and a sleep. Although I was very young at the time I knew the Colonel very well, and I watched him carefully. "What do they say?" he asked me straight off (after having told me he had cabled to my mother to say I was alive). "Who's they?" I replied. "The men," he rapped out. "They're fed up with the casualties," I said, but then he stopped me from finishing my sentence. "You can't make war without casualties," he said. "Oh, it's not that they mind," I explained.

"Only each man has now to groom seven horses!" But I could see he was worried and I was sorry. It should be remembered that a staff officer of a higher formation had tried his utmost to rectify the situation directly he had found out that an order for withdrawal had been given, for which he had been highly commended by Lord Roberts. That staff officer realized that *his* General's plan had been upset, as was undoubtedly the case.

In war, more particularly in a battle, all sorts of things happen which cannot be foreseen. Men go mad, get ill, get tired, hungry or thirsty. Sometimes in battle mad men are shot by sane men or tired men are revived by men less tired (as in the case of Major Bridges in the retreat of 1914).

On Spion Kop Colonel Thorneycroft was, at the end of the day, a very tired, hungry, and thirsty man. He was a man of enormous build and stature. If Colonel Thorneycroft had been physically fit I believe he would have stayed on Spion Kop and relieved Ladysmith shortly afterwards. He came down because he could not comply with Kipling's formula :

"If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the will, which says to them 'Hold on!'"

And as he could not he thought nobody else could, either. He was physically and mentally "done in" *pro tem*.

People took sides over this question, which was, of course, ridiculous, as there can never be any doubt as to a British soldier's duty in a front-line trench, but the Colonel was a very well-known and popular man, who had behaved with great courage earlier in the day. Lord Roberts treated him well, as he was awarded a C.B. and brevet-lieutenant-colonelcy for the period covered by

these operations in Natal. In the latter period of the South African War Colonel Thorneycroft did well in command of mobile columns under Lord Kitchener, receiving a brevet-colonelcy for his services, but, of course, the two phases of that war cannot be compared. In the former we were up against an organized army, working on interior lines, almost entirely composed of marksmen, who were past masters in the application of a certain kind of tactics suitable to the country and to the "silly English," who had to learn by bitter experience. In the latter we were hunting, and gradually wearing down, homeless and foodless guerrillas. In studying the part played by General Thorneycroft (as he now is) in regard to the operation of withdrawal which he ordered, it is as well to remember that if he *had* been supplied with all the wants which he required (artillery, support, ammunition, water, food, etc.) he would have stayed on and thus gained the benefits of the fight which he had actually won.

Unfortunately those necessary requirements were not forthcoming, neither did the higher formation keep adequately in touch as is, alas, often the case in war! I believe myself if a member of the staff of the higher formation had been on the top of the hill, in close touch with General Thorneycroft, he would have averted the withdrawal, irrespective of the supply of ammunition, etc. General Thorneycroft was never the same man after Spion Kop. In my eyes it was, to him, a tragedy which he never was able to get over.

For purposes of comparison it is worth while, and even fair, to study General Thorneycroft's medical history subsequent to the South African War, as, I believe, the extraordinary story of the Spion Kop débâcle can thereby be rendered more understandable. Just prior to the World War General Thorneycroft was commanding the South Midland Territorial Division, as a major-general, when he received orders to ride beside the King's carriage at a certain

function. Rather than do this he applied for a medical board, and was at once invalided out of the service on medical grounds. He had lost his nerve for riding.

On the outbreak of the Great War one of the first things Lord Kitchener did was to look down the list of Reserve Generals for men whom he knew, who could help him to raise the New Army. Seeing General Thorneycroft's name, he immediately caused him to be ordered by telegraph to raise a division. The General refused on medical grounds, and produced doctors and certificates to support him. Later he saw Lord Kitchener in person at the War Office, when his Lordship addressed the General in the following strain: "You are a good organizer. Raise a division, take it to France, and, if you are not fit, get the doctors to send you back to me and you can do something else." General Thorneycroft again refused on medical grounds.

For the last six or more years the General has been a confirmed invalid, suffering greatly. He is deprived of the use of his limbs and is forced to rely on the administrations of others for all his needs. I believe, as one who knows him well, there is a medical connection between the tired commander on Spion Kop and the bed-ridden invalid of to-day.

To revert to the veld of Natal, I suppose there is only one thing which the young soldier funks more than the enemy, before going into action for the first time, and that is the fear that in the hour of trial he *will* funk. So it was with me. It is, I think, rather like making up one's mind to jump into very cold water for a swim, a previous appointment having been made with others that it shall be so. It was comforting to me to know that nearly every soldier *does* feel in a funk before going into action, and that the real test of bravery is the ability to absolutely smother fear, so as not to permit a trace of it to remain, either to self or neighbour.

Our ranks were filled up after the Spion Kop disaster and new officers joined. Among the latter we obtained the services of some first-rate Regulars and some very third-rate Irregulars.

The Colonial private soldier is very critical. His ability to pick out a "good 'un" being amazing, it was not long before the "third-raters" became an object of serious embarrassment to headquarters. It is no exaggeration to say we picked up some of the best young leaders the Regular Army could produce, and some of the biggest asses the peerage could never get rid of. The Colonial does not mind if he is commanded by a peer or a peasant, but he *must* be led, and he expects not to be asked to follow anybody except a *man*. If an individual is foisted on to him who does not answer to that description, "Look out!" is the best advice to give to the unfortunate intruder. By the time I had left to join a regular unit the policy of promoting good men from the ranks had been introduced.

Things cooled down after Spion Kop, so far as we were concerned, till we took part in a reconnaissance in force at Hussar Hill, prior to the final advance which was to bring about the Relief of Ladysmith. This reconnaissance was chiefly noteworthy for the fact that John Churchill, Winston's brother, who was serving as a subaltern, I believe, in Byng's South African Light Horse, was wounded while fighting not far from me.

I had much improved in equitation by this time, but on 14th February, 1900, I had reason to use some very bad words about my relations in Ireland, who, in the days of my youth, had dressed me up in breeches and gaiters for the Dublin Horse Show, yet had failed to teach me to ride. It came about in this manner. We were reconnoitring, when my company commander, Captain "Mary" Molyneux, of the Indian Army, a first-class amateur artist, who on one occasion was nearly captured by the Boers

while painting pictures, decided to cross the River Tugela, which was in flood, in order to find out if a stronghold called Fort Wylie was held by the Boers, as next day the infantry advance was to begin. The passage of the river called for considerable qualities of horsemanship, as the torrent was strong and the water deep, which necessitated a long swim for the horses. The railway bridge at the little village of Colenso had been blown up by the Boers. We assembled under cover of some buildings.

Molyneux, who had with him A. D. Green, a subaltern in the Essex Regiment, who was killed in the Great War, explained the task which lay ahead; a difficult swim, an advance at the gallop in extended order over the open towards Fort Wylie, the drawing of fire, a hasty return and swim back; the whole to be accomplished within an hour at the very most. The skipper called for volunteers and, of course, all came forward. It was no time for hanging back. Off we started at top speed to the river, which was a few hundred yards distant. I shall never forget that plunge into the water as long as I live, my first effort at swimming a horse under fire. Had I been told to jump in off the pier at Brighton with a horse under me, I would have done it equally well, as I knew so little about it.

To cut a long story short, I managed to get across somehow, after which I found myself near Fort Wylie, where we dismounted for dismounted service, and, climbing a small kopje, opened fire on some Boers. Unfortunately, fire was suddenly opened at us from an unexpected quarter, which caused us to be ordered to "stand to our horses and mount." I was riding a grey pony and was weighed down with accoutrements, rifle and ammunition. The reins being thrown to me I fumbled them, off went the grey and with it, I thought, my chances of getting away to safety. In a second I was alone, as all had made off for cover provided by the drift at the river, as ordered. There was nothing for it but to double across the open,

which I continued to do, till a bullet whistling over my head indicated to me that I was being shot at from the kopje we had just left. A few more bullets striking the earth and raining dust about me, as only bullets can do, made me realize that the Boers had got my range and that I had better take cover, which I did, behind an ant-heap. I could see no Boers, but puffs of smoke indicated their position, which I proceeded to fire at, on the skyline. Suddenly a clatter of hoofs behind me made me look back, when I perceived a man on horseback bringing up my grey pony at the gallop. It was Lieutenant A. D. Green, of the Essex Regiment, who had caught the missing mount at the drift. Green was a knowing fellow. Before setting out for me he lengthened the near stirrup leather, as he knew my shortcomings and short leg, and thus managed to get me into the saddle and away to safety. Green got a D.S.O. for this and other good work.

When I reached the drift we all proceeded to take to the water once more. Why it was so I cannot say, but just as my horse began to swim I was swept out of the saddle and almost drowned, my life being undoubtedly saved by another man, who got hold of my bandolier and stuck to me till we reached the other side. By the time we arrived at our bivouac, which was not far off, I had had about enough, so, after feeding the grey, coiled myself up in a blanket, wet through, with the sky for a tent and my saddle for a pillow, and slept a most profound sleep.

The main brunt of the operations which finally led to the Relief of Ladysmith fell on the infantry. We did our scouting, it is true, but our task was easy. We were in the 3rd Mounted Brigade, which was commanded by Lord Dundonald, and with us were the South African Light Horse, commanded by Colonel the Honourable Julian Byng (now Lord Byng of Vimy); Bethune's Mounted Infantry, commanded by Colonel (now General) Bethune; the Imperial Light Horse, a very fine regiment composed of

men from the Rand; the Natal Carabineers, a permanent regiment of volunteers under Colonel Mackenzie, one of the greatest of our South African soldiers, and Gough's Regular M.I. I obtained a very fine view of the attack on Pieter's Hill by the 2nd Royal Scots Fusiliers through my glasses, which pleased me greatly, as, as I have already said, I had a very close link with that regiment. The men moved as if they were carrying out an attack practice at Aldershot. Later I met their adjutant, Captain (afterwards Major-General Sir Amyatt) Hull, badly hit in the arm, who was being taken to a dressing station.

I have already remarked that the private soldier never knows anything about what is going on save that which actually happens to concern him. When, therefore, some of us were told to saddle up quickly, as was I, and to go to a certain spot at a certain time, there to meet representatives of other units, we had no idea we were going to take part in the now historic dash under Lord Dundonald for the Relief of Ladysmith, or, what is a more accurate description of the event, the obtaining personal touch with Sir George White and his gallant men, as the infantry, by their valour, effected the relief after the advance through the Orange Free State under Lord Roberts had drawn off some Boers from the Natal front.

The Colonial soldier had, and still has, the most profound respect for the British private soldier. He is absolutely unlike him, and wouldn't copy him for anything, as his results are achieved in a different way, but he admires his obedience, cool courage and unflinching endurance.

When things happen quickly and unexpectedly it is sometimes difficult to remember details long afterwards, especially when the greatest war the world has ever known has intervened, but I do recollect some of the flattering remarks of some of my Colonial comrades as they rode along the streets of Ladysmith, which were lined by cheer-

ing soldiers of infantry of the line, who could hardly stand up, owing to weakness, but who had proved themselves game to the end. Looking back on events, fortified by years of experience, I cannot for the life of me think why it was that we who were fit were not sent on in pursuit of the retreating Boers that night.

We remained in camp for several weeks, during which time we went on furlough to Durban in turns. I was lucky enough to draw for the first batch. If my memory serves me rightly, Winston Churchill and his mother, Lady Randolph, were at the station at Ladysmith when our train moved off for the South. The Boers had endeavoured, without success, to dam the Klipp River with sand-bags, and thus cut off the water supply of the garrison of Ladysmith. The view from the train afforded us a good idea of this Dutch engineering work, while the temporary railway bridge over the Tugela frankly astonished us, owing to the rapid manner in which it had been constructed. From it I obtained a good view of the spot where I lost my horse on February 14th, and where I learnt that swimming a river in flood is not all jam. I forget now how many days' leave we had been granted, but I remember we had been particularly warned that if anyone overstayed his pass no further leave would be given. On return we gave up our passes in the usual way. Imagine my horror next morning when I was told to report at orderly-room, under arrest, for overstaying my pass! It was gratifying, however, on arrival at "the tent" to find some twenty others there, too.

There is, at times, safety in numbers. We were formed up in a long line, down which the Colonel walked, asking each why he had been absent. When he came to me (whom he knew), he stood and glared before asking me the question, with a look on his face worthy of a very truly serious occasion. If a look could have killed I was a dead man. "I did not overstay, sir," I replied to his

question. "Look at my pass, which I have handed in." The pass was sent for, and, sure enough, was found to have been made out and signed for the date on which I had come back, while a date twenty-four hours anterior had appeared in orders. We had never seen the orders. The charges against us were all dismissed at once, but I do believe some of the twenty had overstayed and had thus profited by my good fortune. I had never before seen a Commanding Officer in a rage with his Adjutant, Orderly-Room Sergeant and Sergeant-Major, and I can frankly say I have never since seen such an exhibition. We all sat on some oat sacks about a hundred yards away and heard every word that was said, while the whole camp turned out to witness the performance. The Colonel was very cross.

I attended riding school at Ladysmith for six weeks, took part in mounted drill daily, and led six spare horses to water three times a day to the Klipp River, which was about a mile away, so thus became quite proficient in mounted work by the time we moved off, preparatory to an advance to Laing's Nek and from there into the Transvaal.

The present Lord Byng's brother became my company commander, and a right good one he was. I cannot remember his Christian name. He was only with us a few months, but during that time, more particularly when we were patrolling daily from Sunday River towards the mountains, he had endeared himself to us to such an extent that the N.C.O.'s of "F" Company, of which I was one, presented him with a cigarette-case when he left which I was sent to buy in Ladysmith. My youthful pride, on being called out on one occasion before the company, together with my sub-section, to be congratulated by Major Byng on what he called "a particularly well carried out bit of scouting work," passed all bounds.

My Colonel had cabled to Colonel Somers Lewis, a

retired Marine, commanding 4th Middlesex V.R.C., in which I was a subaltern, recommending me strongly for a commission in the Regular Army for service in the field.

Lord Rosslyn came to us as a subaltern just before the final advance for the Relief of Ladysmith began. I shall never forget his arrival. He came, travelling "heavy," at an inopportune moment (when even our Colonel had "light" luggage), followed by a cavalcade of camp equipment, pack transport and all the rest, worthy of a commander-in-chief. He was ordered to take it back to Chieveley, which he did, but the air had become positively purple in the meantime.

It is curious how rumour gets round a regiment. Winston Churchill had been taken prisoner by the Boers and, after his escape, had, it was said, written a book. Rightly or wrongly, "the Gods that be" thought that Lord Rosslyn would welcome capture as a means of publicity (he had been on the stage), and in that event special precautions were to be taken to prevent his Lordship from falling into the hands of the enemy. I do not suppose for a moment there was any ground for this thought, which only shows how an idea can catch on.

In our ranks were some quite rich men from the Rand, who were much amused by Lord Rosslyn's recitation at a smoking concert after the Relief. The recitation was the new Kipling poem, which had been set to music, beginning "Cooks' sons, Dukes' sons, sons of a belted Earl," and entitled "The Absent-minded Beggar." Now Lord Rosslyn was an earl, but not very rich, and some even suggested a bit of an absent-minded beggar. An unfortunate and impromptu remark made by his Lordship on this occasion, relative to T.M.I. men being "absent-minded beggars," led to some adverse "booing" at the concert, which, however, eventually turned into cheers after the Colonel had poured oil on the troubled waters by asking all to contribute as much as they could to the

families of the British gentlemen named Atkins, who fought for a shilling a day and did it very well. The result of this appeal was the collection of a large sum of money, which was sent to the proper quarter in England. Colonials are *AI* fellows, with big hearts, which can be easily touched, provided the touch is performed in the right way.

Many of us had been pretty seedy at Ladysmith, the result of something we had eaten or imbibed. Personally I had such bad dysentery for about a week that I thought I should never keep out of hospital, added to which I had a festered nose, the result of sunburn, and those painful abominations called "veld sores" on my hands. My nose took the soft part of my bread ration nightly, in order that I could make a bread poultice for myself, while a stick of caustic from the farrier kept the veld sores from spreading. We made it a point of honour among ourselves in the tent never to go sick, as when we got on to the march our ailments usually vanished.

It was a joyful day for us when we marched off from Elandsplaagte towards Helpmakaar, Dundee and Newcastle, hard on the heels of the Boers, who covered their retreat by setting light to the grass, through which we rode at the gallop for miles. I enjoyed every minute of that pursuit, simply because I had become proficient in all matters relating to my horse.

One sometimes hears of soldiers on service being "dead dog done," that is to say, being so tired as to be quite unable to move. It happened to many during the Retreat from Mons in 1914; it happened during the great defensive battles of 1918 in France and Flanders, but it happened to me for the first time during pursuit in Natal in 1900. We had been in action at Helpmakaar, and from there we had marched to Dundee, where we settled down, as we thought, for the night in comfort. During the day we had collected a wonderful supply of oranges from the

deserted orange groves, as we had picketed our horses in the shade of the orange trees, which were bearing a full harvest.

At Dundee my butcher-batman had bayoneted a confiding lamb, which he skinned and prepared for the pot, together with newly-dug potatoes, in the twinkling of an eye. The lamb was fat, and, as it had to be boiled, it was also rich, whilst we were hungry, the result being that I, with others of my tent, became fearfully ill.

In the midst of this unfortunate occurrence my company received orders to saddle up and move off. We had no idea where we were going or what we were expected to do. Under the leadership of, I think, Captain Shea of the Indian Army (now General Sir John Shea, Adjutant-General in India), who was a company commander in T.M.I., we rode most of the night. In the early hours of the morning, when we were nearing the Ingegarne railway bridge over the river at Newcastle, we heard a terrific explosion. The bridge had been blown up by the Boers, who had thus frustrated one of our tasks, namely, the prevention of this demolition.

We hurried on and, crossing the river by the drift, surrounded the small town by picketing the exits. The last Boer train left the station just as we galloped in. We had only been able to avert the total destruction of a large quantity of furniture belonging to British farmers, which had been stacked up inside the Town Hall ready for the application of a fire-stick. The night being extremely cold, a present of mealie-meal porridge, brought out to us in buckets to the market square, where we stayed till daylight, by the overjoyed inhabitants, proved exceedingly welcome. After dawn we moved off to occupy some high ground some miles to the north, in order to cover the advance of the main body. This we accomplished without incident, but the whole day was taken up in patrol and observation work of a tiring nature, the result being

that after returning to camp that night, and having off-saddled and put the nose-bag on my pony in order to give her a feed, I sank to the ground dead done and slept for twelve hours on end without moving.

At 9 a.m. the next morning we were due to move off with the main body to Ingogo River drift, under the shadow of Majuba. I had to be shaken like a child before I could be restored to consciousness, which rather goes to show that a youngster of twenty-one cannot stand as much exertion as an older man of, say, thirty. All my tent mates were men of from thirty to forty years of age and were not affected by the exertions of the previous forty hours as I had been.

As we neared Ingogo we became aware that we were entering a locality which teemed with interest, on account of its association with the Zulu War of 1879 and the Boer War of 1881, while I personally, on perceiving the great Majuba Mountain in the far distance, with its all-important defeat of General Colley firmly impressed on my mind by my father, and on looking on a war memorial by the roadside to British soldiers who had died in 1881, became "all of a glow" in a manner which has only occurred to me once since, namely, when I was leading a battalion of Royal Irish Rifles over the top at Thiépval on 1st July, 1916. On these two occasions I became impregnated with that "fierce, red-looking feeling" which is an absolute ally of the offensive spirit, and which can only be understood by those who have acquired it on occasions. The blood tingles through one's veins, nothing matters, one's body becomes "set," one seems to believe (it is, I think, a very good thing one does) that one is personally responsible for the Glory of England, and that if one fails then that glory, too, has departed through that failure. 'An appalling thought, but one, I believe, which has added to our glory not a little.

We rested on the banks of the Ingogo River some

weeks, which was pleasant, intermingled, as it was, with mild weather, cold nights, and occasional mounted operations on the Zululand flank, for the safety of which we were responsible.

During this period of rest an epidemic of jaundice broke out, which made many people irritable, and led to quite an abnormal rise in the number of prisoners for insubordination. I was astonished one morning when one of my best pals, whom I had "ragged," owing to his being late in "showing a leg" (the military for getting up in the morning), jumped to his feet and hit me hard with his fist in the mouth. I was so surprised at this that I said and did nothing, and, as nobody had seen the incident, which was, of course, a very serious one, as I was a N.C.O. and he a private, I let it go at that, as it became obvious that the man was ill. A few hours afterwards he was admitted to hospital. I met him during the last war as a captain in an infantry regiment, when I was a brigadier commander, when we dined together and talked over old times.

During the pause at Ingogo I had an opportunity of having a look at General Sir Redvers Buller, as I was one of the mounted escort which accompanied him up the road which runs at the foot of Majuba to Laing's Nek, with a flag of truce, in order that he might talk with the Boer commander Joubert, relative to an armistice. Buller was, of course, quite a hero to Colonial troops, as they all knew him to be a very brave man, who had won the V.C. not many miles from where he was sitting on his horse that day talking to the Boer commander. The tales they heard about the General not being able to relieve Ladysmith earlier, and all the scandal that was talked about him, left them completely cold. It is always so in the ranks, when the character of a brave man is being impugned by those who are not, perhaps, quite so brave. The conversation between the British and Dutch commanders did not last

more than a few minutes, after which we returned to camp.

The advance of the Natal Field Force began by way of a turning movement through Botha's Pass, which brought us into that corner of the Orange Free State close to the Transvaal, and at a spot where in those days three countries—Natal, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal—almost met. At the same time a holding demonstration was carried out in the neighbourhood of Majuba. So far as fighting was concerned the operation was for us a walk-over, only one sharp engagement taking place at Almond's Nek, the casualties among the infantry being few. I shall, however, never forget the night spent on the top of Botha's Pass as long as I live, on account of the extreme cold encountered at that great height. Our blankets and great-coats had gone astray, while tents we had none. We made fires out of cow dung and walked about to keep the circulation going, but it was not till the advent of hot coffee and the sun that we got relief.

My company came into action at Almond's Nek, Captain Mann being killed at long range by a sniper. I rode back about half a mile to find a doctor and was lucky enough to come across an Indian bearer unit, the officers of which were sitting down to a comfortable breakfast at a camp table. As there was no time to stand on ceremony, I jumped off my pony and, approaching the great men at breakfast, saluted them by tapping my left hand on the rifle, which I carried at the short shoulder, at the same time requesting a stretcher, accompanied by a medical officer, to be sent to the hill where Captain Mann lay badly wounded. The effect of this request was electrical. My name and number were taken, for not standing to attention while addressing an officer and for not saluting, and I was informed I had come to the wrong unit. Be that as it may, I got a stretcher and bearer-party of Indians and a doctor, and guided them to the hill, only

to find that Captain Mann was dead. That night I was told off with a working-party to dig Captain Mann's grave, shortly after which he was buried, the Colonel reading the burial service.

This haste was necessary, as we were trekking at 4 a.m. next morning. On arrival at Volksrust we were all in very good spirits, as we had cleared Natal of Dutchmen and were on enemy soil. I was not to rest long, however, as my company was ordered back as escort to the Royal Engineers, who had been detailed to pick up the field telegraph line, which had been laid during the flank movement at Almond's Nek. We thought this was going to be merely a wearisome trek, but to our great delight it turned out that we were to be engaged in a running fight with a small commando, which in its intensity far excelled the engagement at Almond's Nek itself so far as we were concerned. It is often so when two small forces of almost equal strength are opposed. On the completion of our task we returned to the regiment through the Laing's Nek Pass.

In the middle of the fight at Almond's Nek I had received a cable from my father, which read "Commissioned Winchester." I could neither make head nor tail of this, as it meant nothing, but on reaching the regiment I was told that I had been commissioned as a Second-Lieutenant to the Manchester Regiment, which accounted for the error in my father's cable.

I dined with Colonel Thorneycroft and the officers of T.M.I. that night, and left for railhead at Newcastle by road to join my regiment with my faithful butcher-batman and a spare pony. Before leaving, the Colonel had asked me for the names of men who would make good officers in T.M.I., so I was able to do a good turn for some of my pals.

The Laing's Nek railway tunnel had been blown up by the Boers, but on the Ingogo side, on my way down by road, I met and had lunch with Colonel Sam Steel and

some of the officers of Strathcona's Horse, who had just arrived up at the front by train. I was much impressed by this fine corps of Canadians, of which I was to see a great deal ten years later.

I said good-bye to T.M.I. with great regret. There I had received my baptism of fire; there I had learnt to ride under difficult and even, at times, dangerous circumstances; there I had made many friends in all walks of life, united for the time in the common bond of service; and there I had not only become a man but had, for the first time in my life, actually been commanded by *men*. Some men now famous served in T.M.I., notably General Sir John Shea and General Sir William Peyton, the latter being my Divisional Commander during the latter part of the Great War, when I was a Brigade Commander.

At Newcastle, saying good-bye to my butcher-batman pal, after giving him a top-hole lunch and dinner and as much beer as he wanted at the railway station refreshment-room, and patting my pony for the last time, I jumped into the train *en route* for Pietermaritzburg, determined, if possible, to wangle a few weeks' leave out of the Commandant on the strength of a new uniform. On reaching Ladysmith the thought suddenly struck me that perhaps I might never be in that part of the world again, so I hurriedly decided to get out, hire a Cape cart, and drive at my leisure to Spion Kop and Colenso, via the Tugela Heights, and to take note of the British positions from the Boer point of view. The narrow, deep Boer rifle-pits and slits accounted for their ability to defend, while the Boer position at Spion Kop spoke for itself. Up the Boer side light guns had been brought on account of the easier gradient. The astounding thing to me was that the Dutchmen had ever retired at all, which speaks volumes for British valour on top of the hill on January 24th, 1900.

CHAPTER III

FIGHTING IN THE ORANGE FREE STATE

AFTER my arrival at Pietermaritzburg I sought the good offices of the Commandant, Colonel Martin, who led the charge of the 21st Lancers at Omdurman in 1898, and explained to him that I had no officer's kit, that I had not slept in sheets for a long time, that I had not dined at a dinner-table, or even in a mess off a wooden table or tablecloth for such a long time that I had almost forgotten how to do so, and that, on the whole, it was highly desirable that I should have fourteen days' leave *pro bono publico*. To my delight he agreed, but said he had only power to grant me ten days' leave, and that he would send my papers along to my hotel. There was too much of a military atmosphere for me at Maritzburg, so I went down to Durban, got my mufti, which I had brought over from Ceylon, and dined in a dinner-jacket, like a sahib. In due course, at the expiration of my leave, I reported myself for duty at the office of the Base Commandant at Durban and received orders and a ticket to proceed to East London on a mail boat, from whence I was to proceed to Bloemfontein to join the 2nd Manchester Regiment. I was in luck at East London, as there I met a Royal Scots Fusilier, Colonel H. H. Smyth, who knew my people and took care of me. He had his wife with him and was carrying out the duties of a base commandant.

A train journey to the Orange Free State brought me to a halt at a little station, as the line had been blown up in front of us, but luckily the Railway Transport Officer

happened to be D'Arcy Baker (now a big man in the motor trade and Managing Director of Fiat), who had been in the same dormitory with me at Wellington, so all was well. There with him I met his great school friend, Rivett-Carnac, who had also been at Wellington, and who was then a trooper in the Cape Mounted Police. After the South African War was over Rivett-Carnac, who was, I believe, heir to the baronetcy, suddenly disappeared and has never been heard of since.

At Bloemfontein I was joined by an Irishman named Murphy, who had been gazetted to the Leinsters from T.M.I. Murphy had been a planter in Assam. He subsequently left the service and became a Colonial magistrate and later a policeman. Rejoining for the Great War, he reached the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel of infantry and won the D.S.O. for a first-class show. He is now, I think, Commissioner of Police at Zanzibar. We found out that we were going to the "starving" 8th Division, commanded by General Sir Leslie Rundle, and that we had to take a draft of reinforcements up to Winburg in the Orange Free State by train, via Smaldeel Junction. Murphy did not know much infantry drill, and as I had had an extremely good grounding in most practical things of a military kind at the Guards School of Instruction for officers of the auxiliary forces two years previously, I took command of the draft, otherwise I am afraid the men would never have been moved to the station, as Murphy didn't know the words of command!

We stayed two or three days in an hotel at Bloemfontein, when I met an uncle of mine in the Norfolks, who was busily engaged in organizing an officers' club out of the remnants of a derelict hotel, instead of being with his regiment, of which he was second in command. How he managed to wangle this little affair I do not know, but later, when Lord Kitchener assumed command, the club and all that therein was was swept to the four winds by a staff

officer, who had been deputed to clean up the lines of communication and the various bases, not excluding the Mount Nelson Hotel at Capetown.

On arrival at Winburg I was informed that I would be attached to a battalion of the Grenadier Guards, together with my draft (and Murphy) for the trek up to Senekal, which was not a long one. I had about a couple of hundred details under my command, which not only afforded a useful addition to the strength of the Grenadier column, but also lightened their advance-guard and outpost duties.

Colonel F. Lloyd, afterwards the well-known General commanding the London District during the Great War, commanded the Grenadiers, and with him was Captain Corkran (now Major-General commanding the London District) as his adjutant. To my horror I had to put out the advance-guard on the second day out and take up part of the outpost line on arrival in camp. When it is remembered that during the whole of the war I had ridden and performed mounted infantry duties, that I had not given an infantry word of command for two years, and that I had only held my regular commission for a month, I think it speaks volumes for the training received at the Guards School of Instruction at Chelsea Barracks (which was in my time commanded by Major Hon. L. Bagot, also a Grenadier) that I was able to carry the matter off. The Guards, as usual, did us very well in every way, as only they can. It was a great treat to have been attached, even for such a short time to such a regiment. I had found out early that a Guardsman always gives a better show than others.

I had received my regular commission from the ranks of T.M.I., not from the Middlesex V.R.C., and for several years was shown in the Army List as a subaltern in two places. How they eventually got out of the difficulty I do not know, but one day my name disappeared from the crack volunteer corps.

At Senekal my draft split up. Murphy took his Irishmen to the Leinsters, while I spent a few nights with the East Yorks., where I shared a tent with a subaltern called Sunny Wilkinson, with whom I used to play as a child. He died shortly afterwards. Eventually a small convoy was made up, consisting of supply wagons under an Army Service Corps officer called R. B. Airie, a good cricketer and amateur actor, which I was ordered to escort with a few men of the Manchesters as far as Hamonia on the Basutoland border, where the battalion was situated.

Most soldiers have vivid recollections, which never die, of joining their regiment for the first time, and so it is with me. Some are known to the corps before joining, owing to family reasons or tradition. When this is so things are, perhaps, easier, if more formal, while others in peace-time have to face the music alone, unknown and unaided. To these the ordeal is a terrifying one. By the impression created at and after mess on that first night they are judged for better or worse. If they are lucky and can talk the King's English, behave in a humble but manly manner and take a joke, all is well; if not, a rough time is, perhaps, in store. When I marched into camp at Hamonia at the head of a draft I was joining under favourable circumstances.

In comparison to what the battalion had done up to date in the war I was a bit of a veteran. Spion Kop was a word to conjure with, while the Relief of Ladysmith was, and still is, an imperial epic only excelled by the Defence itself. The first battalion of my regiment had taken part in the Defence, and right well had they done, while the second battalion had come out later, and had not taken part in any of the big dramatic actions, although they had had a full share of hardship, cold, and even something akin to hunger at times. My battalion was commanded by Colonel Tom Reay, and with him, as his adjutant, was a young captain called Jebb, who, owing to his inability to grow a moustache, looked about twenty. The headquarters mess

was situated in a little Dutch farmhouse, around which the headquarters officers' tents clustered, while the companies were holding a series of isolated and detached posts.

Within a few minutes of arrival I struck a pal, who, as a Militia captain, had attended the Chelsea Barracks course with me, prior to obtaining an appointment in the Sierra Leone Frontier Police, now known as the Sierra Leone Battalion of the Royal West African Frontier Force. This officer, who had received a regular commission as second-lieutenant at a somewhat advanced age, had taken part in the Sierra Leone Rebellion of 1898 as a captain, and was, when I struck him at Hamonia, transport officer of the battalion. Known as Marcus, his real name being W. C. N. Hastings, he was at the same time not only quite a character, but perhaps the best practical soldier that the battalion possessed at the moment. A brave man, he had considerable respect for the enemy in the field, but none whatever for his superiors, should they chance to be stupid, ignorant, or lacking in that sense of humour which is an essential factor in a military machine. On the top of this he was able to superimpose his own personality, the result being that he generally got what he wanted, which included a D.S.O. at the end of the South African War, which he thoroughly deserved.

My Colonel was very kind to me on arrival, and at mess that night I sat next to him, in accordance with the usual custom on first joining, and at his invitation split a bottle of champagne with him, and recounted in a modest way my experiences in Natal, with the result that I was posted to "H" Company, which was mounted.

This return to M.I. work pleased me immensely and to it I settled down at once. My skipper, Brevet-Major Goldfinch (whose obvious nickname was "Dickey"), was away on escort duty with half the company, while the other half was at Hamonia with the Colour-Sergeant. I took over command of this other half company and awaited the

return of "Dickey" with some anxiety. I had been told that he was "one of the best" and I was not disappointed. Goldfinch had served as a rather senior subaltern in the Sudan Expedition of 1898 with the North Staffordshire Regiment, and for his services had been recommended and noted for a brevet-majority on attaining the rank of captain, which he acquired on promotion into the Manchester Regiment, which, during the South African War, was given two extra battalions. He was an ideal M.I. soldier, easy to get on with, firm, quick in the uptake and bold in conception, who never got anything for brilliant services during the South African War because he fell foul of one man, which is so often the case. I cannot here go into the details of this case, sufficient to say that the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, Lord Kitchener, upheld Goldfinch to the extent of seeing that no harm came to him.

I spent six happy months with "Dickey" in the M.I., during which time we were almost in daily contact with commandoes of Boers, while acting as advance, flank and rear-guard mounted troops. During this time the business of carrying out our work became a regular sport, and as such all ranks of the M.I. company regarded it. Our casualties were few, as we knew our job, yet we were constantly being shot at from afar, but our tactics, founded on those of the Boers themselves and common sense, permitted of no liberties being taken with us by our adversaries. The result was that the main body was never held up if "Dickey" was in command of the advance-guard mounted troops, and camp was always reached at an early hour, which made all the difference to the "foot sloggers."

In July, 1900, we took part in the last big round-up of the war, when Prinsloo, and the whole of his force, numbering many thousands, surrendered as a result of a converging movement of many British columns. As is often the case in big converging movements, we saw no

fighting, as the enemy did not attempt to force through our part of the cordon which had been drawn round. We were, however, able to "make" ponies and thus remount the company.

I acquired three very good-looking Basuto ponies for my personal use, which carried me for the rest of the war. My service in T.M.I. had not been for nothing, as there it was almost a crime for a man to be badly mounted. I accordingly introduced Colonial methods into our company, with the aid of a pair of horse-clippers, Boer ponies being clipped and hogged, and otherwise rendered quite unrecognizable.

Next morning the Prisoners' Camp resounded with the plaintive cry of "War ist mein perd?" We are a lenient people in victory, which is, in the long run, all to the good, but it was very exasperating for us to see thousands of Dutchmen going home on parole, which we knew they would never keep, even if they wanted to, owing to pressure from the national leaders, each with a good Basuto or Boer pony. I escorted several of these convoys of prisoners to Winburg, at which place they were taken over by the department concerned for registration, etc., but I was perfectly sure that these same men would be fighting against us a few days later. How could it be otherwise? It was not until later that the policy was inaugurated of taking everybody off the farms and placing them in camps, while the buildings and supplies which could not be taken away were burnt.

Mr. Lloyd George took a leading part in opposing the policy of extermination by burning and interning in South Africa. His own policy, however, in Ireland in 1920 and 1921 was infinitely worse, as in South Africa, as was so clearly pointed out by General Sir Hubert Gough, what was done was done under supervision of officers and with discipline behind it, in order to achieve a definite end, i.e., the surrender of isolated bands of guerrillas and to end

the war, whereas in Ireland, as equally clearly pointed out by Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson in his diary, the "Reprisals," took the form of personal and private efforts of an undisciplined nature, which the Field-Marshal opposed and protested against to Mr. Lloyd George in person.

After Prinsloo's surrender the policy in the Orange Free State was to hold all the towns, so that they should be denied to the enemy, and to replenish the food supplies in those towns by means of convoys. This duty of convoying fell to the 8th Division, which was living on the country as far as possible. I well remember my men being issued with a ration of flour obtained from a local mill, and their look of blank amazement on being told to cook it. Some of them put it in their water and drank it, with unfortunate results! We existed almost entirely at this time on very tough fresh beef, which was driven along with the column day after day and killed, cooked and eaten during a halt. The much despised bully-beef was to us a great treat in those days, while a Maconachie ration sent us into huge delight.

Typhoid fever, or enteric, as it was called, was claiming officers and men by the score daily, the result of drinking dirty water. It was well for me that I had had typhoid in Ceylon two years previously, as it is said it cannot be acquired again quickly.

One day when I was scouting on the left flank, some miles away from the column, which was trekking from Harrismith to Bethlehem, I spied a long column of dust some miles farther to my left, which appeared to be moving in a south-easterly direction. I could not make out what the column was, but deducted from its length and orderly appearance that it was British. I decided to gallop over to it to find out what it was, and came upon the head of the column halted in the vicinity of a farmhouse. I was told it was the Highland Brigade, commanded by General

Hector MacDonald. Ascertaining where the General was, I found him with Lord Lovat at breakfast, eating porridge.

Asking me to partake of a meal with them, which I was quite ready to do, as I had last eaten prior to a 4 a.m. start, he informed me he was glad I had got in touch, as he had a long telegram from the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Roberts, which he had been ordered to pass on to General Rundle, should he come across him.

As General Rundle was trekking with the column to which I belonged, I was told to take down a copy of this telegram, which Lord Lovat would dictate, and which I would hand to General Rundle personally as soon as possible. I well remember an incident connected with this telegram which served as a lesson for me. After breakfast I produced my note-book to "take down," when I found I had lost my pencil. The General *gave* me one, saying at the same time, "Only bad officers are separated from their pencils." This remark rather upset me, so with a twinkle in his eye he added: "I have turned you into a good officer." I remember little about this telegram, save that it predicted the early end of the war and that I took it down in duplicate and gave one copy to my sergeant, telling him, in the event of our meeting with any Boers on our way back, his first and only duty was to get through with the message and leave us to our own resources.

As our column had been moving in the opposite direction for a long time, while I had been delayed in another direction, it was obvious I had several hours' galloping ahead of me before I could strike off the road, if I took a line oblique to it. It was extraordinary what a "veld sense" had grown up in me during nearly a year spent in finding my way about a country where one kopje looks very much like another and where all is open, undulating, and the same as far as the eye can ever see.

On this occasion I struck General Rundle's camp within half a mile by direct line and spied it from a kopje at about the spot I expected it to be, yet I had ridden hard for twenty miles as the crow flies, over ground I had never traversed before, without a map. True, at one time I began to think we were completely lost, owing to the insistence of my sergeant that we were riding in the wrong direction, and to the fact that a small party of Boers had appeared between us and the road along which our column was marching. These astute farmers endeavoured to elbow me off in a southerly direction, and to prevent me from getting to a high kopje from which I would probably be able to see my main body. However, we outmanœuvred them and achieved our object.

I always seemed to be running into "feeding" generals that day, as when I reined up and jumped off to hand over the copy of the telegram to Sir Leslie Rundle, he was having his lunch with his staff in the open. He asked me to join them, which I gladly did, after I had watered and fed my horses, and told my men to eat the "unexpired portion" of their ration, as I, too, was by then hungry. To my amusement, all the officers of my battalion, including the Colonel, were lying on the ground a few yards away, waiting for their mess cart and baggage to arrive, in order to have their lunch, while I was "tucking in" with the Divisional Commander. General Rundle did not realize that I belonged to his Division and thought I had come from General MacDonald's camp, as at the conclusion of our meal he asked me to give a written message to General MacDonald on my return. I explained that I belonged to him and that my horses were tired, but that if he would place some fresh men and horses at my disposal I could take his message to the Highland Brigade. I was not, however, called upon to perform this extra duty.

Apropos of General Rundle, I was told a story of him which is, I think, worth repeating, if only to show the

good nature of the man and the dangers and risks which beset subalterns when off their guard.

A gunner subaltern named Lowther, who had been at Wellington with me, had the misfortune to be badly hit by a bullet during a rear-guard action in which his section of guns had been nearly lost, and were only saved by the valour of the Guards. This little action took place a few miles outside Senekal, in the Orange Free State, during the passage of a convoy to another town, with which General Rundle was trekking. Lowther was sent back in an ambulance with a doctor, under the Red Cross flag, to the hospital, which was in the church at Senekal, and in due course recovered. On his return to Senekal some weeks later General Rundle visited the hospital and saw Lowther. It so happened that the General, being originally a gunner, used sometimes to wear a gunner field service cap in the afternoon after the sun had gone down. On the occasion of which I write he not only wore his gunner cap but a "coat British warm" without badges of rank. To Lowther, therefore, the General, who looked and was young, was a gunner and nothing more. Asked in a sympathetic way how he received his wound, Lowther, looking up at the gunner cap on the General, poured his heart out to a fellow-gunner. "You, as a gunner, will well understand when I tell you," he said, using these words or words to that effect, "that — fellow Rundle, himself a gunner, who *should* know, does not know how to handle guns any better than he does infantry; he got me 'scuppered'!" The General carried off this *faux pas* with the greatest tact and good humour and thoroughly sympathized with the patient, perhaps having in view the fact that temperatures are liable to rise if the patient is subject to shock! Later an A.D.C. entered the hospital and, asking to see Lowther, quietly handed him a bottle of champagne, which the General had sent him as "a small solace."

Bill Lowther told me this story himself with, perhaps, a little garnish, when we were taking part in the Kano-Sokoto campaign together at Zaria, in Northern Nigeria, three years later. "What *did* you do?" I asked him, after he had told his tale. "What *could* I do?" he replied. "There was nothing to do. Anything else said would have made matters worse!"

Bill Lowther died before the Great War, while attached to the Egyptian Army. He was a man who cared not twopence for convention, and in the good days when it was a crime for an officer to walk down Piccadilly between twelve and one o'clock, midday, with a lady, unless dressed in a top-hat and frock-coat, he did it in an old country suit, smoking a pipe. He was merely in front of his time apparently, but when remonstrated with about this lapse he merely replied, "Well, you needn't have come to see me if you hadn't liked, and, after all, the lady didn't mind, and as she didn't what the devil has it got to do with you!"

I had gathered from the telegram from Lord Roberts which was taken down by me "in clear" that the Commander-in-Chief considered the war as virtually over, which came as rather a shock to me, as, apart from the "brass monkey" cold mornings, as we called them, with ice on the buckets, formed overnight, and early starts or standing to arms before dawn, I loved every moment of those days. We now know that Lord Roberts had wrongly appreciated the fighting tenacity of that gallant little band of Boers under Botha and Smuts, who kept the flags flying so long after they had been beaten in the hopes of getting better terms for their country owing to continental intervention. Acting on the "inside information" obtained from the telegram, I put my name down for service with the West African Frontier Force in Ashanti, where an expedition under Sir James Willcocks was just coming to an end, in response to a call for subalterns to volunteer, which had been published in orders.

My Colonel was furious at my seeking to leave the regiment, and immediately issued orders for my return to duty from the mounted infantry to a marching company, which surprised me not a little. I complied with the order that night by going out on to outpost duty with "G" Company, and made arrangements with my M.I. company commander, "Dickey" Goldfinch, for my horses to be looked after. Meanwhile "Dickey" next morning, riding with the advance-guard mounted troops, told the G.O.C.'s, A.D.C. and Brigade-Major what had happened, with the result that a "request" was made by Brigade Headquarters for my return to mounted duty "in the interests of the service." I can quite understand my Colonel's annoyance at my putting my name in for special service elsewhere, after being only a few months with the battalion, but he did not know my circumstances. Now colonels make themselves more *au fait* with the details of a subaltern's life. As to the course which he pursued in returning me to duty from M.I., and substitution in my place of an officer with no M.I. experience whatever, General Boys' action speaks for itself.

The Yeomen of England had been coming out by degrees and had struck us as being the right stuff. We had not, however, been in actual contact with them until chance brought us to General "Bar" Campbell's brigade, in which were battalions of the Guards and the Leinsters, where I met my old friend Murphy of T.M.I. and Major Dickinson, his company commander, with whom I was to journey up the River Niger in a few months' time, chance having again brought us together. Captain Seely and the two Heseltines, Christopher and Godfrey, were with the Hampshire Yeomanry, to whom I was attached with a section of Manchester M.I. during one trek. That trek stands out in my mind for two reasons. Firstly, I shall never forget a "conversation" which was carried on between Seely, at the top of a little kopje, and a Yeomanry

colonel at the bottom. As my men were Regulars I was glad they were out of earshot!

The second thing which I can recall is that the Hampshire Yeomanry left me on a kopje, which had to be held for tactical reasons, with my section of Manchester M.I., and returned to camp to eat, drink and sleep, promising to see that I was relieved by the Guards, in order that we, too, might get our food and rest. I was *not* relieved till well past midnight, and then only after I had sent a message by mounted orderly in the dark to my own skipper, "Dickey" Goldfinch. As I had been kept without blankets, food and coffee for the men, or water and feed for the horses, or rest for both after a very long day, with the prospect of another in front of us, "Dickey" had something to say to somebody.

We got on with the Yeomanry very well on the whole, and to Sir Samuel Scott, who was serving, I think, in the West Kents, I owe a debt of gratitude which I can never hope to repay. My pony, putting his foot in a hole during a hurried rear-guard retirement, turned a complete somersault, and, having deposited me on the veld in a shaken condition, got up and made off with the rest of the horses. Sir Samuel came back for me under fire, and insisted on me hanging on to his stirrup leather while he galloped back to safety.

Tempest, of the Scots Guards, who had some scouts called after himself, was hanging round in those days, as was also Charlie Heathcote-Drummond-Willoughby of the same regiment, who during the Great War commanded the 120th Infantry Brigade, when I commanded the 119th Infantry Brigade of the same Division.

After three months' continuous trekking between Harrismith, Bethlehem, Senekal, Rietz and Vrede, the battalion was practically in rags. Eventually we were ordered to march to Standerton, on the main railway line from Natal to Pretoria, there to refit. For this final trek

between Vrede and Standerton over a hundred of our men had to be carried in ox wagons, because they had no boots to march in. People may talk of the greatness of the World War, which was, of course, quite a different kind of war from the South African War, but those who only served in France during the Great War can have no idea of the sufferings of the British private soldier of infantry during the struggle in South Africa between 1899 and 1902. The mounted man was generally all right; the officers were (and almost always are) all right, but the other rank foot soldiers were almost always "up against it." The never-ending march, outpost duty, often after a tiring day, badly cooked and insufficient food, worn-out and torn clothes, boots which did not answer their purpose, biting cold mornings followed by days of intense heat, filthy water, often polluted by the carcasses of dead animals, these and other pleasantries made up the daily life of your infantryman. There were no billets or huts to walk into in South Africa after a long and tiring march. Tents had to be pitched at the end of the day and struck and loaded up, generally in the dim light of dawn, before starting.

At Standerton I met my old corps, T.M.I., which was literally bursting with comforts from home, good food, beer and baccy.

Our stay at Standerton was not a long one, as we were suddenly ordered off to the south, while I was in temporary command of my M.I. company, in the absence of "Dickey" Goldfinch.

I spent a pleasant month on this trek, while acting as brigade commandeering officer under the Brigade Supply Officer, Captain Jim Harrison, of the A.S.C. I had a section of M.I. with me. Our duties were to round up all livestock, and collect, bring in or burn all stores, forage or foodstuffs. I lived on the fat of the land with the Brigade Supply Officer, as did also my men and horses, and only left because, on reaching Winburg, I received orders to

proceed to Cape Coast Castle on the Gold Coast. Harrison was a first-rate boxer, whom I subsequently met fourteen years later when he was commanding the Divisional Train of the Ulster Division.

From Winburg I proceeded by train to Smaldeel Junction with my soldier-servant, where I met an old schoolfellow, Orlebar by name, who was then serving as a private in the Elswick Battery. He subsequently took a commission in the Sherwood Foresters, and did very well in the Great War. As far as I can remember, we had a great fraternization at Smaldeel Junction, as I, being an officer, could obtain whisky at the Field Force canteen, but what I remember best about Orlebar was his beautiful beard.

During the previous six months I had come across a Cape Colony volunteer corps called P.A.G.M.I., which is the short for Prince Alfred's Guards Mounted Infantry. This corps, being on a permanent volunteer basis, could not normally be compelled to serve outside Cape Colony, and was, in fact, being returned home for disembodiment at the time I was travelling south to Cape Town to take ship for Madeira, on my way to West Africa. The Boers attacked the train in which the "Pagmis" were travelling, and gave them a pretty warm time till relief arrived.

The railway authorities had profited by this experience, as, in addition to attacks being made on trains, bridges and culverts were constantly being blown up. To combat this evil every train carried on it Boer hostages in the shape of prominent local residents of the district. Notwithstanding this safeguard, the train in which I was travelling came to a sudden stop one night just as we were approaching the Orange River, an obstruction having been placed on the line, which was luckily discovered in time. The obstruction had presumably been intended as only part of the plan, as directly we came to a standstill fire opened on us from both sides of the line. There is very little to

be done in such circumstances, especially in the dark, but it so happened that I, as the senior combatant officer on board, had been placed in command before leaving Bloemfontein, so had to do something. Had I been merely a passenger I should, perhaps, have taken refuge under a seat and prayed for luck.

There is something peculiarly Gilbertian about an attack of this sort at night, as people are not then at their best, particularly those who have undressed and are sleeping in comfort. I remember a paymaster-colonel and a doctor-major during this little encounter. They both became excited. I shoved the paymaster under the seat, which was about the safest spot which could be found, while the doctor I told to stick to me, as there was sure to be work to be done in his particular line after the battle.

The escort on the train had a regular drill procedure, which they performed if attacked, and which consisted of a sort of outward enveloping movement, which threatened the flanks and rear of those in ambush. On this particular occasion they did it so well, and got so far behind the Boers on each side of the track, that they managed to concentrate the whole of their fire on our train. It takes a good many bullets fired at random to kill one man at night, the result of a vast expenditure of ammunition on this occasion on both sides being one British soldier and two Dutchmen wounded.

At dawn, having cleared up the débris, we continued our journey, the remainder of which was quite uneventful. I had had my last little scrap with Brother Boer.

In concluding this chapter, it is as well to consider briefly what progress I had made along the path which leads to success or failure. I had undoubtedly learnt more about soldiering in the previous year than it would be possible to learn in peace-time in a whole lifetime. As I had been "thinking on horseback" for a whole year, my mind had been accustomed to the making of rapid decisions

and bold strokes, which is, I think, one reason why, on the whole, mounted soldiers make better leaders of higher formations, such as armies, than do soldiers who have been accustomed to operate when young on their flat feet. The Great War bears this out. French, Haig, Gough, Byng, Allenby, Chetwode and Birdwood, to mention only a few, were cavalry soldiers. Plumer, Godley, Rawlinson, Smuts and Botha were mounted infantrymen, while Horne was a horse-gunner.

There is really no need to go further down the scale to emphasize the point, but, as a corps commander, the mounted infantryman-cavalryman, De Lisle, and, as a divisional commander, the horse-gunner-mounted infantryman, Tom Cubitt—the latter being considered the best divisional commander we produced during the war—and the horse-gunner Hugh Tudor, who, as a thruster in France at the head of the 9th Division, was unsurpassed in 1918, only bear out my contention. I had also gained great Imperial experience and had had my eyes opened to the greatness of England. I had seen Zulus, Basutos, Cape Boys, Hottentots and Swazis obeying the white man and respecting the flag, and I had seen that this had only been achieved by fair dealings. I had talked and served with soldiers from loyal little Natal and had received hospitality in their homes. I had met Canadian and Australian soldiers and I had got to know something of the Boer farmer. I had proved myself physically fit and had avoided hospital during a period when it was difficult to keep off the sick list.

It was with these thoughts, after avoiding the lime-light of the Mount Nelson Hotel, that I said good-bye to my servant, who was glad to get a spell of rest at the base, and set foot on the deck of the *Dunvegan Castle en route* for Madeira and the West Coast of Africa.

CHAPTER IV

"WAFF" MEMORIES

Nor long ago an old portmanteau belonging to me was found in the basement of a London club. It had been there since 1906 and had been entirely lost sight of and forgotten. It is covered with labels, some of which are over thirty years old. To me these form a link with a most interesting past, covering the annexation of Northern Nigeria. But, interesting as the outside of the box may be to some, the contents appeal to me very much more. The box contained a few of my letters, written as a very young subaltern in the West African Frontier Force, a corps which has recently been honoured by the prefix Royal, as a mark of Royal favour for hard and exacting work efficiently done. I propose to run through some of these boyish screeds, and to comment on them from the point of view that it is always easy to be wise after the event, and to show up not merely the daily routine work of the men who, in those days, were junior or comparatively insignificant and have now achieved fame in the realms of soldiering or Colonial administration, but the quiet way in which Sir Frederick Lugard brought the Hausa States into the Empire.

I find my first letter is written to my father, then soldiering at home, from Las Palmas. It is dated January 20th, 1901, and briefly states that I had a good voyage from Cape Town, and that the rest "in sheets," after a year on the veld, is "immense." I was looking forward to seeing new countries, and the voyage down "the Coast" was going to give me much pleasure.



CAPTAIN CRAIG, M.P., AND SERGEANT PERRYMAN AT CRAIGAVON. THE SERGEANT BECAME A COMPANY SERGEANT-MAJOR AND WAS AWARDED THE D.C.M. IN THE GREAT WAR.



LIEUT. F. P. CROZIER. 2ND W.A.A.F. 1902.

A letter posted at Freetown, Sierra Leone, describes the Elder Dempster boat *Accra*, a mere cockleshell, which was stuffy and uncomfortable. A fellow-passenger, Captain A. B. Molesworth, of the West India Regiment, is alluded to. He was in command of a detachment of Yoruba Engineers of the "Waffs," which he had taken over to England for a course of engineering at Chatham. He evidently took a fancy to me and told me quite a lot of useful things, which I passed on to "the Governor." "Moley," as I was subsequently allowed to call this remarkable man, whom I helped to bury a few years later, had a peculiar career. He was a "sahib," who enlisted in the Oxfordshire Light Infantry. Well educated and of good address, he became lieutenant and quartermaster in a surprisingly short time, and accompanied Colonel Lugard, as he then was, to Nigeria in 1898, or thereabouts, when the West African Frontier Force was first raised to take the place of the old Royal Niger Constabulary, which was to be disbanded on the transfer of government from the Chartered Company to the Crown on January 1st, 1900.

Molesworth never liked being a quartermaster and, as he generally achieved whatever he set out to do, obtained a transfer to the West India Regiment as a combatant lieutenant, eventually becoming substantive captain. A kinsman of Molesworth, the great engineer, he managed to be given permission to raise and command a company of Engineers, of all things. He told me what a good time he had had in London. He had entertained the Duke of Cambridge to lunch at the Carlton Hotel and had stayed at Balmoral with Queen Victoria, who inspected his Yorubas in the Castle grounds, but, for all this, his nose was a bit out of joint during his return voyage, as, with the march of progress, Sir Frederick Lugard had brought a Public Works Department into being, under a capable Indian P.W.D. engineer, John Eaglesome by name, which meant that Molesworth, as an engineer, became a very "small boy."

I appear to have given my father a very detailed description of this wonderful man's history, into which I wove the story of the foundation and rise to fame of the "Waffs" under Lugard.

Another letter, written from Forçados, at the mouth of the Niger, or, to be more accurate, at the Burutu entrance to the delta, minutely describes my impressions of Free-town, Sierra Leone, a "hot hell-hole"; the Sierra Leone Constabulary and Gold Coast Hausas (not yet incorporated into the "Waffs," but soon to be brought into the fold); Monrovia, the "home of Yankee-speaking Blackmen," which boasts a navy of one ship, "more like an obsolete steam yacht than a man-of-war."

A landing in a minute dug-out native canoe at Elmina appears to have given me "a bit of a thrill," and I remark that "I don't think I would do it again; it was an unnecessary risk taken through ignorance." The old Dutch Castle at Elmina "pleased me much," principally because the thick stone wall kept the place cool. We sat on the old ramparts and drank gin cocktails with a lonely civil official, who implored us to stay as long as we could "for company's sake." I discovered that Elmina was ceded to us by the Dutch in 1872, and that its name was derived from La Mina, from the gold found there. The sunset over the water was, apparently, wonderful, so wonderful that we were late for dinner on board, but whether it was really the sunset or, what is more likely, the cocktails, I did not confide to father, although I, even now, have a lingering memory on the subject.

Cape Coast Castle next day gave me another "thrill." This time it was the landing on the top of the surf which "sent my heart into my mouth." I looked over the castle, now used for civilian quarters and for stores, and found out its history. It was first built by the Portuguese in 1610, taken by the Dutch in 1643, dismantled by Admiral Holmes, R.N., in 1661, and in 1665 the British factories,

which had sprung up in the vicinity, were destroyed by the Dutch Admiral De Ruyter. In 1667 it was confirmed to us by the Treaty of Breda.

All these things I wrote to my father, “ knowing you are fond of history, which is best picked up locally, and to which the Croziers, in the past, have contributed so much.” The same letter strikes a note of sorrow, or perhaps awe. The “ old-timers, palm oil ruffians, we call them,” in other words, traders, during the voyage down the Coast had been cramming me up with stories of the “ white man’s grave,” purely for mischief, and of them, according to the letter, I took no notice.

As bad luck would have it, during the four hours’ voyage across the bar to the Government hulk at Burutu, which served as a rest-house for travellers, in a small branch boat, which was fitted up with a very small deck cabin, which served as a saloon, a passenger died of sunstroke. “ His dead body, covered with a sheet, was laid out at one end of the saloon, which was only about fifteen feet long, while we were supposed to sit down to ‘ chop ’ (in West Africa all food is ‘ chop ’), ten of us in all, at a long table, the end of which almost touched the corpse. I couldn’t do it, yet I was afraid to go out in the heat of the intense sun, as it was just twelve o’clock, and the iron and steel work on the deck added to the high temperature. There was practically no breeze. I huddled myself up in the corner nearest the open door and closed my eyes, endeavouring to get to sleep. The branch boat skipper, a kindly old salt, thought nothing of this episode and ate a hearty meal at my elbow. The dead man, it appears, had been drinking heavily on board and had been up the Coast and back for his health’s sake, which accounts for his sudden end, when exposed to the sun on the top of whisky. But it did, and still does, make me think and shudder. Life is apparently very cheap out here.”

At Burutu we received the unwelcome news that we

should have to wait a long time on the hulk for the arrival of a Government stern-wheeler to convey us up the River Niger to Lokoga, a big cantonment at the junction of the Benue and Niger Rivers, and the headquarters of the 2nd W.A.F.F. In these days the journey from Lagos to Nigeria is made by train in, I believe, two days. It took us anything from a week to ten days to get up to Lokoga from Burutu.

In my next letter, written from the hulk itself at Burutu, I appear to have a distinct and somewhat just grievance (which, as a matter of fact, was remedied shortly afterwards by the alteration of the regulation). I had been stuck on the hulk for a week, but as I was in Southern Nigeria, although on a hulk belonging to the Northern Government, my tour of duty, which was for one year, did not start to count till I reached a spot called Idda, on the frontier. I asked my father to go and see the Colonial Office about this! "It is a very stupid regulation," I wrote. "Supposing when I do approach Idda my steamer runs on a rock or something, and strands us a hundred yards on this side of the boundary, am I to trek over the border and sit down in the jungle in order to start my tour?" I also wrote about my kit. Having been on service in South Africa I only possessed uniform, one change and a valise; no cooking utensils, lamp, gun, rifle or tin box, yet I was told I had to have all sorts of things, including saddlery, mess kit, medicine chest, filter and goodness knows what. Strange to say, I completed my whole tour in complete comfort, with practically what I had in South Africa, in addition to a few things drawn from store or purchased at the Niger Company's canteen.

I was joined on the hulk by an old friend, Major N. H. C. Dickinson, of the Leinster Regiment, with whom I had served on trek in the Orange Free State some months previously. His arrival was a godsend. He was *senior*! Thus I wrote about him: "He is kindness itself. He

walked me through the swamp by a raised path to the Niger Company store, which is surrounded by a stockade and gattling guns, where he bought quinine, which he advised me to take regularly every day, so as to keep free from fever.” (This I did for five years.) “After which he found out that a Niger Company stern-wheeler was due in on Sunday. He has arranged for two passages, for himself and me, unless a Government boat comes in before, and is paying for them himself on the chance of a refund, so I shall be off shortly, perhaps before this letter leaves here.” When the transport officer on the hulk heard that the Major was going to take me with him on the Niger Company boat *Koronga*, he nearly had a fit! “Such things are not done,” he argued. “Well, it’s time they were!” was the only consolation he received.

My next letter, written from Lokoga, is probably one of the longest, if not the longest, letter I have ever written in my life. It is dated March 1st, 1901, and comprises thirty sheets of foolscap paper. It describes our journey up the Niger, tying up every night to a bank of the river at some dirty native village, so that the crew could get what they wanted and spend the night as they wished, while we were eaten by mosquitoes. It sets out how we started off on the Niger Company steamer and had constant trouble with the engines, which were repaired time and again by Major Dickinson, who was a practical engineer and a chief inspector of mechanical transport during the Great War. It describes a friendly visit to a Roman Catholic Mission Station at Akassa, when we were loaded up with fresh fruit and eggs by those good Christian men and women. I appear to have been particularly struck with the way these people taught Christianity and a trade together.

Pot shots at “crocs,” basking on the sand-banks, guinea-fowl shooting in the evening (for we had acquired guns and ammunition), the almost “fierce” vegetation down to the

water's edge in the delta gradually giving way to open scrub, small hills and flat country, not unlike the bushveld of South Africa, as we neared the boundary at Idda. All these things are rarely seen from the deck of a steamer by white men now. In those days the Niger was the highway to and from civilization, for every single one of the Government servants, Niger Company clerks and officials, and missionaries of all creeds; now the railway has taken priority of place for almost all. Other things have remained much the same as they were when it took me some two months to get from Liverpool to Kano. Men still engage their "boys" or servants for a tour on arrival, and buy each other's "dokies" (ponies), but there are now tarred roads for motor transport throughout the length of the land, in addition to bush paths, while white women rule the roost, as they do in India. I should prefer the Niger of my day! Now they talk about "camps of exercise" for soldiers during the dry season. Our "camps of exercise" were the annual expeditions of annexation, reprisal or reconnaissance, with the certainty of a medal or clasp at the end of it and the hope of a brevet, D.S.O., or "mention" thrown in.

But to return to this very long epistle, written to an all-interested father: I told him how we put up our beds at night on the deck and took them down in the morning; how at every meal sardines and "cutlegs" (the pidgin-English for cutlets) made their appearance; how every "cutleg" was made of diminutive chicken and every chicken was a "carzar" (in Hausa). The languages, too, I discussed on paper. One appeared to be Yoruba, spoken by men who filed their teeth and had woolly hair on their heads and a preference for "yams," while another was said to be Hausa, "which would take you anywhere."

And then I dealt of the river itself—"Mother Niger," I called it. At first a rushing torrent, from a mile to two miles wide, gradually narrowing down, but still deep and

dangerous till it became almost a trickle, just wide enough for a stern-wheeler to plough through a winding course, not unlike an unlimited number of "S" springs piled one on top of another. "On either side of the stream in the upper reaches," I wrote, "the sand stretches for miles to the permanent banks, waiting to be covered by the winter rains, and through this we all had often to get out and push, as we do to the motor-cars at home." The reference to "motor-cars at home" sounds amusing in this era of mechanical effort. "I often walked for miles on the sand," I continued, "when the sun was going down, and sat down and waited in the cool of the evening for the old stern-wheeler to catch me up, as, for every mile I had walked she had had to cover at least three, owing to the winding, narrow, shallow bed to which she was confined, and this at a snail's pace."

My first impressions of Lokoga are worthy of notice. We arrived there at about noon and tied up to a mud bank, "which they called the wharf." Rose, of the Scots Fusiliers, the Adjutant and Station Staff Officer, rode down on a very thin tat to meet us, and, after asking for our names, asked us how many carriers we wanted for our kit. When we said "two each," his face was a study. "We have no kit," we said, "as we have come from South Africa." It appeared that this was an unfortunate remark to have made, as everyone in Nigeria had tried to get to the Cape, and those that didn't crabbed it. "Well, you had better get some," he curtly remarked, although he did not suggest how this was to be done. I was told I should be posted to the 2nd battalion at Lokoga, while Major Dickinson was informed that he was to proceed to the 1st battalion at Jebba. "I suppose I did the same things as you did when you arrived at a new show in India," I wrote. "I filled up a record of service, and after they saw I had been with the M.I. in South Africa I was immediately told I was to go at once to a place called

Wushishi, to take over M.I. from a man called Porter of the 19th Hussars, who is due for leave. So my luck is in and I am off, and I am told there is a chance of a scrap." Needless to say, I was highly elated at my good luck, which solved an acute problem of mess kit, of which, as I have already said, I had none. I then go on to describe in monotonous detail the drawing of tent and camp equipment, the purchase of a tin case, in order that I might protect my limited outfit from white ants; the purchase of six months' stores from the Niger Company and a not bad-looking pony from my new Colonel, McClintock by name, "A poor thing in comparison with my Basuto," but not so bad on account of my good light weight.

Two things astonished me very much during my twenty-four hours' stay at Lokoga, apart from the affability and complete absence of side of Colonel McClintock. Firstly, all the soldiers and a few others played polo three times a week, yet there were never any practice or instructional games. I had never played polo before, yet I was made to play at once during that short stay at Lokoga. As I did not know the rules, I was, of course, a dangerous quantity in a very dangerous game; not that polo, as such, is dangerous, but because I was not the only one, apparently (from the amount of swearing that went on), who had no idea of the customs or regulations. But this went on, week in and week out, and nobody seemed to mind or get seriously hurt. The second thing I noticed was that after mess everyone sat on at the table till an extremely late hour, sang songs and drank a great deal, many being carried off to bed for a brief sleep and a cold bath before going on to early morning parade.

I was not sorry when I left Lokoga. I was told nobody ever saved money there, despite the fact that a subaltern of six years' service drew £350 a year, quarters and seven shillings and sixpence a day, local allowances, and that higher ranks drew increased pay in proportion. I have heard that

things are a great deal better now. In my day a subaltern's mess bill in Lokoga was rarely under £30 a month.

My next letter, written this time to my mother, with a request that it should be forwarded to my father, was dated March 6th, 1901, from a place called Egga, which was a small Niger Company trading station on the right bank of the Niger. I describe therein the relative importance of Lokoga and the seat of Government, Jebba, which I had, of course, not seen, and which, as a matter of fact, I never did see. “ Jebba,” I wrote, “ is IT, because it is the seat of Government, and for no other reason. It is said to be less healthy than Lokoga, but that I cannot say. It is also the headquarters of the 1st W.A.F.F. The first battalion wears the red fez with a red tassel; the second has a green. Both wear the red Zouave jacket, embroidered with yellow braid. Khaki shorts, putties and accoutrements of the usual kind, in leather, completes a very smart full dress, finished off with a cummerbund of red or green to match the tassel.” It is so to-day. For drill order the Zouave is omitted and in fighting kit the cummerbund is left out, the khaki smock being worn outside the shorts, with the ordinary shirt inside. “ I was much amused,” I add, “ to see a working-party at work with the long-tailed shirt *outside* the shorts.” But as for Lokoga, it is, and must be, the distributing centre for men and material, so long as the Niger is the highway. It also feeds all the stations on the Benue River. “ As time goes on and railways appear,” I had the nerve to prophesy, “ it will lose its importance, but poor Jebba will disappear altogether. The new capital is to be at Zunguru, now nothing but bush, and to within a few miles of it I am going.”

Apparently I had with me a goodly cavalcade of men and stores at Egga. My own “ boy ” or servant, a cook, horse-boy and pony, with twenty-five “ carriers ” for my personal baggage and stores, comprised my own *entourage*, but in addition I had with me twenty loads of small arm

ammunition and thirty loads of telegraph and engineer stores for Wushishi. To one quite unaccustomed to human transport (everything had to be carried everywhere in those days), this seemed almost overwhelming, but in practice it worked smoothly, the carriers being such by profession, and being organized under their own headmen, who alone were held responsible. These carriers received ninepence a day when carrying and threepence a day subsistence money, unless they were issued with rations in kind. For an unloaded return journey they merely received their subsistence.

I had one great regret at Egga, as there I left my good friend, Major Dickinson, whom I have never seen since. We had travelled to Egga by Government stern-wheeler. Why I was put out there I am not sure, as Muraji, at the junction of the Rivers Niger and Kaduna, where there was a hulk, was clearly the most convenient place for me to start from. Possibly it was because of a shortage of native canoes at that place. However that may be, I started off from Egga with a flotilla of some twenty canoes, including one covered with mats in which I lived and slept for a week. This novel way of travelling interested me very much. I had nothing to do except shoot duck and geese for the pot, as the canoe men knew their work, paddled or polled all day, and seemed to know exactly where to pull up at night. We were able to buy a coarse fish at the villages, which did not make at all bad eating. The natives used to make a sort of bamboo enclosure, under and above the water, into which the fish used to swim, at intervals a door being let down, which rendered escape impossible.

My next letter home was written from Wushishi on 21st March, 1901, and is full of interest. I had arrived at my journey's end on the 20th, for which I was not sorry. A verbatim extract from this letter will not, I think, be out of place.

" Seven days on the Kaduna River in a dug-out canoe was all I wanted. On the eighth day we made our start to trek overland by a bush track from a little fishing village soon after daylight. I felt an uncanny feeling. I did not know the language. My ' escort ' consisted of three native privates and a lance-corporal. We were passing through the Nupé Province, the capital of which is the big city of Bida, which had only been subjugated six weeks previously. I did not know the routine of trekking in this new country. Maps there were none, of course, whilst many villages through which we passed were burnt or abandoned. Slave-raiding had been rife here for centuries until a month ago. I could only do one thing; pretend to know all and trust to my Lance-Corporal. This acted very well. He had come down a few days before with a party and knew the way. I left it all to him. But it gave me a funny feeling to go out into the unknown blue, practically alone, in a strange country for the first time in my life. We always got our journey over by midday, after which I ate and slept until 4 p.m., when I had a cup of tea and went out shooting for two hours. During this journey I shot duck, geese, bush-fowl (a sort of partridge), guinea-fowl, sand grouse and several kinds of plover. What can mortal man want more? "

About this time I appear to have told my fond parents that I would write a little daily and post once a week, the reason being that the dispatch of the mails depended entirely on the time of the arrival of the English mail, which was carried by selected " runners " from Muraji. These runners used to cover forty miles a day with ease, and keep it up for many days on end.

At Wushishi I found " C " Company 2nd W.A.F.F., of which some thirty men were mounted on ponies captured from the Fulani raiders and the Nupé Emir in the immediate neighbourhood during the preceding year. Porter, a temporary captain, had done very well in this

guerrilla struggle, and had been noted for a brevet-majority on attaining his troop in the 19th Hussars. The whole surroundings suited his temperament. In London he was a "masher," at Wushishi a "slasher." "Bertie Porter is off again," I note in my letter. "As there are no more slave-raiders to kill or ponies to pinch, he is off to Porter's Flats (called after him) to bring in some 'beef' for the pot." These flats, within three miles of my mud hut, were in the rains marshland and in the dry season held almost every kind of antelope obtainable in West Africa, the rarest of which is the sable.

"I had my first good shoot yesterday," I noted on 2nd April, "at Porter's Flats. For five hours I lay in the long dry grass, on the edge of the grazing, while herds of kob, hartebeest, roan, and an occasional water-buck grazed quietly, till moved off by the flies. It was a wonderful sight, and I had great fun, picking out what I thought to be the best heads, and waiting for them to come closer. I had learnt the look of the heads from Rowland Ward's book. Porter will not allow indiscriminate slaughter, which is a very good thing. 'Good bodies for the pot and good heads for the wall,' is his slogan. I gazed at these beautiful animals through my field-glasses for hours on end, and, as they were so close, I could see their whiskers.

"Eventually I singled out a water-buck about eighty yards away, which looked a good all-round animal, for my right barrel, while a bunch of kobs, slightly to my left, and about thirty yards distant, looked as if they would afford me a target with luck for the left. I was shooting with a Cogswell and Harrison shot and ball-gun. I grassed the water-buck, after which the place was alive with antelope dashing off in all directions, many of which had been hidden from my view. I tried the old stalking stunt of whistling to make them stand, only I used my shrill service whistle, which had the desired effect. I

should think about eight hundred antelope of all kinds turned round and faced me, and as I had loaded again, I got a nice right and left of kob and roan. My fear is that, as a railway is going to be constructed from Wushishi to Zunguru, the new capital, at once, these flats will be overrun by all kinds of people, firing at anything, wounding and leaving, and generally murdering. We shall have to try to keep these people out. They will have the Kaduna River to cross in canoes, so I think as we, the soldiers, are still running the civil side, we can get it put out of bounds, which is quite fair, as, if there were game laws, they would have to have permits to shoot, and would probably be limited."

"Porter and his company are literally in rags," I write. "They have been hard at it in the wilds for over a year, and next week their relief comes, in the shape of another company under Hall, a captain in the Suffolks. I stay on, I am glad to say, while the first civil official, a Resident, arrives. As Hall will have a subaltern, and a gunner is also coming up with a section of guns, we shall be six white men, including the doctor, in addition to which a British colour-sergeant and all kinds of railway construction people will make the station a second Lokoga. But it is still the bush."

In due course Porter departed and soon after my friend Molesworth passed through with his sappers, *en route* for Zunguru, where he was to clear the bush and erect all the military quarters and offices. At the same time John Eaglesome, the D.P.W. (now Sir John Eaglesome), hove up to make the survey of the ten miles of railway from Wushishi to the new capital at Zunguru. This he speedily carried out. I became particularly friendly with "John" at this time. He was very anxious about the railway, as he was working against time. In the tropics there are things you can do in the wet season and things you can do in the dry, and if you miss you have to wait. Con-

sequently, the supply of local or "forced" labour was important; also the supply of food for the natives on construction work. The new Resident proving unequal to his task, this work of collecting labour and food fell on us soldiers, an extract from a letter written by me on 4th June providing evidence of the varied work which fell on our shoulders. In this letter I say: "I have just returned from a three weeks' patrol in the Gwari country (the Gwaris are pagans). I visited many villages, which had never before been visited by a white man. At each village I had to interview the 'King' and explain to him why we had to have labour and food, which would be paid for, for the railway and new capital. Many villages cleared out to the bush, and left me to myself, when they heard I was coming. News spreads like wild-fire. I had fifty men (including M.I.), and about ten carriers for my kit, and I was always headed by my bugler, carrying the Union Jack on a pole."

There is at the present time a tin mine called Minna in the Gwari country, which I traversed in 1901. My first meeting with the King of Minna has always impressed itself on my mind, as his failure instantly to comply with my orders nearly cost him his village and me my commission! It happened in this way. His town, perched on a hill, the latter entirely surrounded by a mud wall at its base, appeared on my list as levied at a certain number of men and women for labour, and a certain number of bundles of guinea corn for food. (Nigeria is a handy place, as there the natives and horses often eat the same things.) I accordingly camped outside the wall, under the Union Jack, sent an interpreter in to tell the King I wanted to see him, and awaited events. It must be remembered that I had no experience of the country, that I was at the time saturated with the mentality of war, and that I thought that everybody knew as much about the Union Jack as I did.

During the preceding year Major O'Neill, a gunner, and

Captain Bertie Porter had burnt and inflicted punishment for slave-raiding on several strongly fortified towns in the vicinity of Minna, such as Piko, while Mikumkellie had "bent the knee" to us, which meant a very great deal.

My interpreter came back and said he had delivered my message. Meanwhile I ate my "chop" and awaited the arrival of His Majesty. As nothing happened I proceeded to become very "annoyed," and told the interpreter to go into the village again and to inform the King that if he did not come out forthwith and do homage to the British flag I would set fire to his village and make war on him and his villagers, whereupon I proceeded to post my men and make the necessary arrangements for carrying out my threat. Luckily for me, my interpreter brought out a very old man, who, he said, was the King, but I have reason, from subsequent inquiries made, to believe he was nothing of the sort. The interpreter had grasped the situation and had brought the first old man he came across, well knowing that I would never know that he (the interpreter) held the key to the situation, as I did not then understand a word of the language, and he could say what he liked. I thereupon delivered a lecture to the old black man and his naked followers on the duty of the British subject to the British flag, which I made them all salute by bowing low to the ground on their hands and knees, as is the customary method of salutation towards a superior in that part of the country. I then explained at great length why we wanted the labour and food, how much they would be paid, and so forth, and told the old man the exact amount of labour and supplies required to be delivered at Zunguru (the site of the new capital) on a certain date.

I departed next morning for Wushishi, and on arrival was handed my letters and some official documents, one of which made my hair stand on end, and made me realize what an escape I had had at Minna. It ran as follows:

“ His Excellency wishes it to be understood that he considers the time has now arrived when the use of military force in the Gwari country is unnecessary, save for purposes of defence. Friendly intercourse with the inhabitants of the country, who are entirely ignorant of British habits and customs, *absolute justice and fair dealing*, and the application of those simple principles which have made the British Empire great, are the best weapons in the British armoury. Any officer taking upon himself the responsibility of burning, seizing labour or supplies, or conducting military operations of a punitive or coercive nature without the consent of His Excellency, obtained through the usual channels, will be sent home at his own expense, as being unsuitable for the country, and will be subsequently disposed of as the Secretary of State may direct.”

I ceased to be a cheap-jack scabbard-rattler from the moment of reading that minute. It dawned upon me that there was something mightier than the sword, once the battle had been fought and won. But I could not keep from thinking about what an escape I had had at Minna, as, if my youthful, misguided, and utterly mistaken idea of British superiority, or, at least, methods of establishing Imperial ascendancy, had taken form, I would undoubtedly, and with justice, have been sent home as an Imperial danger.

In a letter home I say, “ I am always getting into tangles, entirely through inexperience,” and then I go on to add, “ John Eaglesome, whom I have already referred to as the constructor of the first bit of railway in Northern Nigeria, asked me, before going back to his headquarters, to have an eye to things, as his base at Wushishi, where much of the work is done, is without white supervision, and the continuity of work is a vital factor in the construction of the railway. The River Kaduna has a rise and fall of many feet, and it is necessary to take advantage of this in the wet season.”

“ It so happened that, as I had been left in command at Wushishi, owing to the temporary absence of Captain Hall on patrol, the powers of a commanding officer devolved on me. I can, as a commanding officer, inflict a maximum and summary punishment of flogging, in addition to imprisonment with hard labour in the case of a native private soldier, and can reduce a native N.C.O. to the ranks. A native foreman from Lagos, who had been left in charge of the construction work by John Eaglesome, and who spoke English well, came over to me one morning to tell me that some dozen of his English-speaking, highly civilized, Christianized and thoroughly spoilt carpenters from Lagos, and other parts of the Coast, were on strike, and absolutely refused to do another stroke of work till some grievance had been rectified.

“ Remembering what Eaglesome had told me, I rode over to the P.W.D. camp and spoke to the men, urging them to go back to work, promising that any complaints which they might have would be looked into by me and rectified as soon as possible, if found just, provided they lost no time. This they refused to do, which appeared to me to be very unreasonable. I warned them that I would come back at 9 a.m., and that, if they had not started work, I would bring over soldiers to make them work. At 9 a.m., finding things had not altered, I made a prearranged signal to the fort, which brought over my British colour-sergeant, a hefty Highlander, and twenty men with fixed bayonets, who surrounded the strikers. I then asked them once more to return to work, which they again refused to do, whereupon I caused each of them to be tied up in turn to the wheel of a railway truck, with bared backs, and to be flogged by my own colour-sergeant with the official leather ‘ cat.’ In the ‘ Waffs ’ it is a point of honour among the men to take a flogging without a murmur, but with these carpenters it was evidently different. The shrieks were long and piercing, and could be heard a long distance

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away. The result of my drastic action was that the men in question returned to work and never worked better."

"But there was another side to the case. The other day John Eaglesome arrived from Jebba, and in the evening, as was his wont, came over to have a cocktail at the fort. He was usually a cheery fellow, but on this occasion he was pulling quite a long face, which astonished me."

It appeared that he had been met on arrival by a deputation, representing all the English-speaking Christian clerks, tradesmen and other workers, who complained of the manner in which I had treated the strikers. It also transpired that they had sent to Lagos to have a black barrister briefed and a writ issued against me for assault. It appears that I had no right to flog these men, who, in the eyes of the law, on account of their domicile, possessed the same rights as white men. That twelve of them should have been actually flogged by a subaltern of twenty-two years of age was not only a crime but a diabolical act of barbarism. There is no doubt that, if John Eaglesome had not been my friend, I should have been sent home, but he knew that what I had done I had done purely in order to get the work finished, and in ignorance. What actually happened I never quite knew, but I was sent into the bush on a long patrol out of the way of writs, while the Chief Justice and the Attorney-General got matters settled, through the good offices of Eaglesome.

"I had, of course, confused my powers," I wrote. "Had my soldiers done as the Christian carpenters had done I should have been justified in doing precisely as I did, but apparently the Christians are immune from the application of penalties devised to meet the requirements of these pioneer days. None of us have much use for the imported 'foreigners' from the Coast. We find them cheeky, unsatisfactory and possessed of most of the disadvantages acquired from culture and none of the

advantages which we expect to find, and which go to balance up the frailty of human nature."

At Wushishi we lived in a mud fort and in round mud huts with two entrances. In order to show that I was not foolish enough to think that all the sinners in the locality were to be found in the Christian ranks of the Lagos "gentlemen," the following little story will illustrate the fact that the weaknesses of the flesh, to which we are all heirs, were to be found among our Mahometan soldiers too. All our men were paid in silver, which meant that a great many ammunition boxes full of two shilling, shilling, sixpenny and threepenny bits were necessary for the pay and weekly payments of money in lieu of rations. Captain Hall was responsible for this money, which he kept in his own hut under guard of double sentries, in order to conform to the regulations for the safe custody of public money. One night, while Hall was asleep, nearly all the money was stolen. The sergeant of the guard and sentries must have been in it, of course. They were tried by court martial at Wushishi and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, by order of the Commandant, Colonel (afterwards General Sir T. L. N.) Morland, who commanded the Xth Corps during the war in France, and subsequently the Army of the Rhine and the Aldershot Command, from which he retired only to die, as a result, I feel sure, of exposure to privations cheerfully endured for the Empire in the tropics. But penal servitude was gladly suffered by some Nigerian soldiers on the strength of obtaining several hundred pounds at the termination of the sentence, there seldom being restitution in those cases. Five hundred pounds to a Hausa was a huge fortune.

With all their shortcomings, however, I long ago came to the conclusion that the native of any country in his natural state is much to be preferred to the "civilized product" of the "white man's burden." By saying this, I must not be considered to be unaware of our Imperial responsibilities and

obligations in regard to the "uplift" of humanity—far from it—but I do know where the disadvantages are to be found, and I sometimes think we are a little impertinent when we assume that *our* "culture," *our* religion and *our* political institutions are the best for the races of other lands which have come into our possession. Sir Frederick Lugard knew the happy medium; that is why he succeeded.

At Wushishi we were on the fringe of Hausaland. A trek north or north-east would have meant a trek across Africa, till the white man was again met. True, Wallace, of the Royal Niger Company, and Bishop Tugwell, a missionary, had already been to Kano, but they were unarmed, and did not stay long. An armed expedition had penetrated to Kaduna, the present capital of Northern Nigeria, the year previous to my arrival, but it had met with opposition, and had returned, the time not being ripe for effective occupation. The Hausas had worked across Africa and down to the Coast in days of old, but their penetration to the Coast was only the peaceful penetration of the trader. I believe—my belief is based on local inquiry—the Hausa invasion, which never penetrated effectively much beyond the pagan belt, that zone being used as a locality into which slave raids could be made, was held up by the tsetse fly, for the Hausa was a horseman. True, the "fly" abounded farther north and east in the Hausa States, but it was confined to belts and areas, whereas nearer the Coast it was to be found everywhere. The Hausa "buffer states" were effectively encountered by us, in so far as Northern Nigeria was concerned (I am only writing about this portion of West Africa), at Bida, the capital of the Nupé country, and at Kontagora, at the time I arrived out and passed through that territory. There there was undoubtedly less "fly" than at other places, so much so that Kontagora became the headquarters of our M.I., in preference to Wushishi, till we advanced to Zaria and Kano, and permanently occupied the heart of Hausaland in 1903.

On one of my last patrols in the Gwari country I wrote home: “ I came across the tracks of a herd of elephants, which was moving at right-angles to my line of march. Of course I was confined to the winding bush paths, which were made centuries back by the local farmers and traders moving between villages, as I had baggage. I, however, decided to camp, as time was no object, and to follow the elephants. The task was not difficult, as on a front of about a hundred yards small trees, grass and boughs were uprooted, while the ground was trampled down. After ten hours’ tracking through the bush, accompanied by my orderly, my horse-boy, horse and one carrier, I came up with the herd at the side of a fair-sized stream, which ran between the elephants and me. I had never seen elephants in the wild before, and as I had little time in which to make up my mind as to which to fire at, I selected a bull, which presented a good target at sixty yards range, and put a heavy bullet from my Cogswell and Harrison shot and ball-gun behind his ear, which brought him to his knees. The rest of the herd did not see us, as I was in thick undergrowth, and made off. I sent my carrier back for men, and next day some three hundred natives from neighbouring villages turned up, an elephant kill being an event not to be lightly passed over. I gave them the body and meat and kept the tusks for myself.”

In October, 1901, I appear to have received a letter from my father, in which he must have given me some “ sound advice ” regarding treatment of native populations, for in that month I wrote to him, saying: “ I fully appreciated the unselfish service your father rendered in India to John Company and the Maharajah of Vizianagram, and the spirit of friendship, which had lasted for over fifty years, between the latter and grandfather, and I will do my best to follow in his footsteps.”

Despite the rainy season I had a great deal of shooting at Wushishi in 1901, and killed a fine wart-hog, within a

stone's throw of camp, as well as the usual birds and antelopes.

As I have already said, Captain Molesworth, of the Engineers, had passed through on his way to Zunguru, where he was busily engaged in erecting military quarters and offices. He had often asked me to go out and stay with him, and, as I had been warned to proceed to Bida with half a company, to relieve a company which held the fort there, and which was wanted for service with the expedition under Colonel Morland, which was to proceed to Yola, on the River Benue, for the subjugation of that place, I rode out and stayed with Molesworth for three days. I found the site of the new capital to be nothing more than a clearing in the bush, which contained an amazing amount of game. As I was told the lions roared all night after feeding, and kept everybody awake, while the native labour had stockaded themselves in, as a protection from attack by the King of the Forest, I sat up for three nights over a live bait, in the hopes of getting a shot, while I scoured the rocky hills for miles round by day, as I was sure it was in these fastnesses that they had their lairs, but without result. My luck was out, as, although I heard the roars by night and followed up the spoor by day, I never got a shot. It was not till about a year and a half later that I shot the only lion I have ever killed, not far distant from the same locality.

I proceeded to Bida in due course, and there relieved an officer in my own regiment, Captain E. M. Baker, who had left South Africa for Nigeria a few weeks before me. He had been lucky, as, immediately after arrival, he had taken part in the expedition against Bida. After the fight there he had been ordered to build a mud fort two miles from the city, and to hold it with a company. Now he was to take part in the Yola "show," which was to be a "river war," the town, in fact, being eventually bombarded from the deck of a stern-wheeler, preparatory to the assault.

I had sent a runner on to Baker, to tell him I would arrive with my half company before lunch, and suggested that he should send his company, luggage and carriers on to his place of embarkation (he was going down river in native canoes), merely leaving a rear party, and that I would give him lunch, after which he could gallop through in the cool of the evening and join his company just prior to the departure of the canoe convoy by night. He fell in with the suggestion. After we had met he handed me over, with many instructions as to their care, a large number of pigeons, which had been given to him by the Emir of Bida, as he was very fond of these birds, which had become very tame. Later, after lunch had been announced by my boy, Alassen by name, we were served with a course, the foundation of which was obviously some bird, and which was quite pleasing to the palate, so far as things go in Nigeria. In remarking on the qualities of good cooking which had been displayed by my cook in the preparation of this hasty meal, Baker asked Alassen where he had obtained the birds and what they were. Imagine his face and mine when the black urchin, with great pride, pointed to a pigeon, which was sitting on the arm of Baker's chair, and said, “ Pidgin, Sar,” with a grin on his face as long as from Bida to Bulawayo!

The garrison at Bida was my first command of all arms, as, in addition to my half company of infantry, I had two guns under a native N.C.O. and some mounted scouts.

The régime of law and order and civil government was growing apace and was hardly understood at times by the soldiers, as the following little story will illustrate.

The Resident at Lokoga, who was also a barrister, sent a communication to the Officer Commanding troops at Bida, by means of a “ Court messenger ” or courier who was escorted by several policemen. (The Northern Nigeria Police had not long been established.) The overland trek was not only a long one, but liable to be quite perilous at

times. The Resident therefore armed his messenger with a sort of safe conduct, written in English and Arabic characters. This document, which was an imposing one, began with the legal phrase "Know ye by all these presents," or words very similar. When the messenger arrived at Bida on a somewhat unpleasant task of arresting a soldier for a civil offence, he presented this document to the Officer Commanding troops, who was very young. The soldier immediately wrote back to the Resident at Lokoga to the effect that his messenger and policemen had arrived minus "the presents" and that as it was obvious they had "pinched" them he had put the lot in the guard-room, pending the arrival of further evidence from Lokoga regarding the handing over of "the presents." Needless to say there was, to put it mildly, a huge "fuss" over this incident.

At Bida I was first initiated into the intricacies of civil government, as I lived in very close touch with the Resident and his assistant. During the four months or so I was in contact with these two men I breathed an entirely different atmosphere from what I had been accustomed to at Wushishi.

The Resident was Major Alder Burdon, now Sir Alder Burdon, a Colonial Governor, while his assistant was Popham Lobb, till recently Colonial Secretary of Cyprus. Burdon was very kind to me. Had I taken his advice, and not listened to unsound arguments from home, I would have transferred to the civil side, as he promised to back my application by writing to Sir Frederick Lugard on my behalf. His word carried great weight with the High Commissioner in those days. Burdon had had a romantic career. As far as I can remember, the son of a bishop, he had taken his degree at the 'Varsity and suddenly decided to enlist in the Army, joining my own regiment, the Manchesters, as a private. He speedily obtained a commission in a line regiment, after which he proceeded

to the Niger in the early days, obtaining extra-regimental promotion to captain and a brevet-majority for service in the field. When quartered at Mullingar, as a subaltern, he had, with some others, bought a hunter from an aunt of mine, which they christened "Syndicate" for obvious reasons.

Sir Alder was prematurely grey, which led to his being nicknamed "Mai Ferrankai" by the natives, that being the Hausa for "the man with the white head." I do not pretend to know how to spell these Hausa words, but the natives were very quick not only to give a nickname to a white man but to hit upon a suitable one. For instance, I was always called "Massa Kano," which sobriquet dates back to an enterprise carried out by me for fun at Wushishi, when I rode into the market-place through the Kano gate in full war-paint and trappings of a Kano potentate, with turban, richly embroidered gown, riding boots of red Kano leather, silver sword, native saddle and horse furniture, preceded and followed by scallywag retainers of the orthodox variety, for a bet, and cleared the whole market.

Popham Lobb and I got on very well together.

Between them these two men made my stay at Bida very pleasant. I continually stayed the night at the Residency. As a temporary measure, pending the building of a proper building on high ground outside the city, the Residency consisted of a set of sun-dried mud buildings placed at the disposal of the Resident by the Emir of Bida.

Burdon had a small pet monkey called "Madam," of which he was very fond. "Madam" was very tame, and was friendly disposed towards most white men, but she had a weakness. She liked whisky and soda and she positively adored cocktails, and in the evening used to drink the dregs of her master's glass as we sat round in the compound after the sun had gone down. On one occasion Burdon went on tour round his province and left me in the Residency. On the evening before her master

was due to return "Madam" drank the whole of my cocktail, which had been placed on the ground beside me, and became what is called in common parlance not "as drunk as a monkey" but "as an owl." Nobody had noticed this effort of intemperance on the part of "Madam" till I reached down for my cocktail and found the glass empty, after which the culprit was found in a state of complete collapse under a tree. We poured water on her for hours without effect, and when I went to bed I thought she was dead. This unfortunate apish debauch upset me very much, not only because I knew how fond the Major was of his pet, which he had owned for a considerable time, but because I felt a certain amount of personal responsibility in the matter, as cocktails are dangerous enough in the mouths of human beings, but in those of apes they appeared to be deadly! I literally dreaded the return of the owner next day. How *could* I break the news? What *would* he say? How could I account for and explain my utter carelessness and want of thought, after all his kindness to me? With these thoughts in my mind I lifted the seemingly lifeless body of poor "Madam"—another victim of alcoholic poisoning—on to the fork of a big tree under which I slept, for the nights were hot, on the chance of her getting a little more air up aloft. Next morning, when my boy brought me a cup of tea at 5.30 a.m., my first thoughts on opening my eyes were for "Madam." There, to my great relief, sitting disconsolately in the fork of the tree, with hand on head and bleary eyes, sat My Lady, a sad victim of that awful feeling of "the morning after the night before!" She had revived, and I, too, was saved. Placing a large bowl of water at the foot of the tree, I called to her, when she descended and drank it dry, not twice but thrice. Like a true victim of the drink habit, in a couple of days' time, after the reactionary depression had worn off, she was at her old games again.

I paid several visits to the Emir of Bida with Major

Burdon, and was lucky enough to be able to attend the ceremony at the Feast of Ramadan, with the Resident, in state. It was a fine sight. The Emir, under a huge umbrella, mounted and accompanied by his suite, and followed by about ten thousand of his subjects on horseback and on foot, took up his position on a wide open space amid the beating of drums and tom-toms and the blowing of horns. The Resident, in spotless white, took up his position seated on a mound, whereupon the Emir, too, dismounted, after which the exchange of the usual salutations and courtesies began. Later the whole vast assemblage, clad in white, and led by their chief mallam, or priest, went through their devotions to Allah, to the recited wording of the Koran, voiced in unison, accompanied by the correct bending of the body. I was, of course, in khaki, but, I fear, a fly in the ointment of unblemished white, as, although my sword hilt and spurs shone and my belts were well polished, my uniform, which had lasted me through the South African War and almost a year in Nigeria, was in rags and tatters, my breeches being one mass of red Kano leather patches.

The leather of Kano, the locally dyed skins of the goat, the most ordinary colour of which is red, with variations of delicate green and yellow, which are more costly, is in reality Morocco leather. A considerable trade used to be carried on between Kano and the Mediterranean ports across the Sahara Desert, in my time in Nigeria, by means of caravans of donkeys and camels, hence the designation “Morocco” leather in Europe.

Beyond the smaller antelope and gazelle and the usual game birds, Bida was not a good centre for sport, the country round being more cultivated than was the case at Wushishi, but on my way down to the River Niger, on my way home in 1902, on the River Kaduna, I managed to bag a harnessed antelope, which was a rarity in that part of the world. The bush-buck is sometimes mistaken

for the harnessed antelope, as both possess the markings of harness, but I had the head and skin verified on reaching England. In this case the animal was drinking at the river-side in a backwater when my canoe passed. I had purchased a Lee-Enfield .303 magazine sporting rifle, with Lyman back-sight attached, from an officer who was going home, and with this weapon I brought the antelope down, no doubt owing to the accuracy of the peep-sight. It was a good weapon, having the added advantage of the calibre of the service rifle, which solved the ammunition problem.

Just about the time I was due to go home on leave, my friend, Major Dickinson, of the Leinsters, was given command of a small expedition, which made a dramatic dash for Zaria, in the heart of the Hausa States. With him was Captain Abadie, as Political Officer. Abadie was one of the most promising young men of the Lugard school, who would have gone far. Alas, he died early in his upward flight. Major Dickinson was awarded a D.S.O. for his services in command of this expedition, which was entirely successful, mainly owing to a detour made and led by Abadie across the open bush of the Northern Highlands, which entirely surprised the enemy and led to their defeat. They had been used to the white men advancing along the recognized bush paths. A Residency was established at Zaria. I made a bold bid to join this expedition, and offered to stay out a further few months in order to do so, but the dictum was that I had to go home up to time, so as to come out for the Kano-Sokoto campaign.

There had been trouble at Kumassi in 1901, owing to a mutiny in the West African Regiment, and, in order to relieve a most uncertain situation in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, caused by this mutiny, an expedition was sent to Kumassi under the great little West African warrior, Major (temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) Arthur Festing, C.M.G., D.S.O. (otherwise known as

"The Rat"), of the Royal Irish Rifles, who was killed at Festubert in 1915.

The mutiny of the West African Regiment was one of those things which never should have been. After the Ashanti expedition was over the regiment, which was recruited from Sierra Leone, was left at Kumassi, a promise being given that they would only be kept there a certain time and that their wives would be sent round to them from Sierra Leone. Every West African native soldier has a wife. A promise given to a soldier should never be broken, as he is not like a civilian inasmuch as he has to obey or "get out" of his own free will. Even then, sometimes, he is not allowed to "get out." The men of the West African Regiment, becoming exasperated at delay, mutinied in a most orderly manner. They placed all their officers and British N.C.O.'s under arrest, while the native sergeant-major took over command of the regiment, after which they cut the telegraph wires and marched to Cape Coast Castle. There they arrived unexpectedly, and, seizing the bank, paid themselves. Then they foolishly endeavoured to march through Liberia to Sierra Leone, and were rounded up by the Royal Navy and Gold Coast Hausas. The ringleaders were tried and shot in Cape Coast Castle. When all this happened Kumassi was left undefended at a critical period in the history of the Gold Coast. Colonel Festing's force, arriving in the nick of time, restored confidence.

The year 1902 was a very important one in the history of Nigeria. Yola having been taken by Colonel Morland, he, later in the year, led an expedition to Lake Chad, and prepared the way for bringing Bornu under effective occupation.

The late Colonel McClintock, one of West Africa's best soldiers, who hailed from north of the Boyne, in Ireland, led a special mission of negotiation to Emir Fadda Allah, with whom an understanding was reached.

McClintock was specially chosen to do this work, as he possessed a great hold over the natives, prestige, combined with imposing stature—a very important thing—and knowledge of the language. He met Fadda Allah dressed in the full-dress uniform of the Seaforth Highlanders on a scorching hot day, when he did a great day's work for the Empire.

At last my time came to embark on the boat for home at the mouth of the Niger. I had been away from England three and a half years. During that time much had happened and I had "grown up." I was simply longing to see London. We embarked at Lokoga on the stern-wheeler *Empire*, when, after steaming a few hours down the River Niger, the unexpected happened. We ran full speed ahead on to a submerged rock, and just managed to get to the side with a full list to port and tie up without foundering in deep water. As good luck would have it, an up-going steamer passed us shortly after our mishap occurred and took word to Lokoga of our distress, whereupon my friend, John Eaglesome, arrived on the scene, in another stern-wheeler, accompanied by the Director of Marine Services, Commander Pagett Jones. We transhipped our belongings to this other vessel and raced for the sea.

Voyages home are very much the same in all parts of the world. One eats and drinks far too much, and sleeps as much as one can. So, too, it was with me, but this was my first journey home. I had travelled east to Ceylon and back to the Cape, and then almost home to Madeira, only to penetrate from thence to the Bight of Benin up the Niger into Darkest Africa.

I remember little about the voyage, save that I met one, MacGregor, a subaltern of the Guards, on board, with whom I became friendly, and whom I never met again till I lunched with him at Riga in 1920. MacGregor won a D.S.O. in the South African War, and, as Colonel

Morland's staff officer at Yola, he was also recommended for a D.S.O. In these days he would have acquired a bar for Yola; then it was not possible.

At Sierra Leone a Colonial civil servant called Leslie Probyn came on board, *en route* for England. He was eventually knighted and became a Governor. I won a small bet over him shortly after he arrived home, just as he was entering a tailor's shop, called Cobb's, in Baker Street. What the bet was about I cannot here record.

I do not believe there are many things which are more pleasing to the eye of the hard-bitten traveller returning home after a rough sojourn abroad, especially if he happens to be a lover of things beautiful, than the sight of England's green fields from a railway carriage window on his way to "Town" from the port of debarkation. As I looked upon the changing scenery of Devonshire, Wiltshire, Berkshire and Bucks. on my way up from Plymouth, and as I gazed upon the enchanting backwaters of the river at Goring, Pangbourne and Maidenhead, which reminded me of happy days of the past, I could not help thanking God I was British. The same feeling struck me some years later on my return from the golden prairie of Western Canada, and invariably took hold of me on my journeys home on leave during the great epic of 1914-18, as I gazed on the fruit gardens and meadows of the "Garden of England" from a Pullman car, which added a fillip to "the Will to Win."

CHAPTER V

SOLDIERING IN NIGERIA

THE greatest pleasure which I derived from my long leave of five months spent in England in 1902 was the thought that I was giving unbounded happiness to my father, whose days were numbered. The pride with which he met me at the station, the joy he expressed on first seeing my South African War medal with seven clasps; the interest he took in my description of the King's Levée; the review of the Colonial troops on the Horse Guards Parade by the present King, in which I took part; the Coronation of King Edward and my life at Alexandra Park, where I was quartered for a period, while in command of the Northern Nigerian detachment "home" for the King's Coronation, all helped to deaden sorrow.

Throughout all these festive activities, which included a reception at Devonshire House by the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire—at which I well remember seeing Lord Kitchener and General Botha chatting together in amicable conversation, as only former soldier-adversaries can do—I did not neglect my military education. I attended a private course of instruction at the Maxim gun works at Erith, which involved an early rise for two weeks, and catching a train at Charing Cross at 7.30 a.m., while later I completed the musketry course at Hythe during my leave. It was very necessary for those fighting in West and Central Africa to have a complete knowledge of the Maxim gun, as two of such guns, with the necessary number of gunners and carriers, formed an integral part of the establishment of

every company. I had also attended a course of instruction in the use of the prismatic compass and the sextant, at the headquarters of the Royal Geographical Society, of which I was in those days a member, in order that I could comply with the regulations in vogue at that time in Nigeria, which ordained that all routes should be sketched on a cavalry sketching board, and localities surveyed where possible. There was in those days no map of Northern Nigeria.

My father died a few days before I returned to Africa in September, 1902, and in due course Colonel Thorneycroft, my old Commanding Officer of T.M.I. days, married my mother in June, 1903. I did not attend the wedding, which was a large and fashionable one, as I was abroad.

On returning to Lokoga in October, 1902, I found myself posted to my old Wushishi company, which had come in for refit, under Captain F. F. W. Byng-Hall, my old company commander, who had attached the prefix Byng to his name. Byng-Hall, who was also in command of the battalion and the station, is a very remarkable West African soldier-administrator, who is still, I believe, in harness in Nigeria. He was seldom fit but never very ill, except on occasions when he contracted such little trifles as blackwater fever and beriberi (a tropical disease, involving the loss of the use of the legs, which Europeans seldom acquire and from which they rarely recover). He first went to "the Coast" in 1898, where he served with the West African Regiment in the Sierra Leone Rebellion, and, save for a period spent in South Africa during the Boer War, has been on the Niger ever since. Ceasing to be a soldier on the active list he transferred to the civil side. A cheery fellow, I believe his sense of humour and inability to acknowledge defeat must have carried him through his thirty years of West African service.

I had not served at Lokoga before and I did not like it, but the knowledge that I was shortly going on the Kano-Sokoto campaign with Byng-Hall made up for much. The

mess bills at Lokoga were much too high, which made it impossible for a subaltern to save money. Thirty pounds a month for a mess bill was a small amount, in addition to which there were polo ponies and poker debts. I saw an adjutant part with six months' pay and his ponies, his gramophone, guns and spare saddlery, everything bar his shirt, in fact, in one night at poker after mess. But, from a soldiering point of view, Lokoga was an excellent place to learn in. There everything was mobile. When a white man was murdered in the bush, which was often the case, a punitive expedition to avenge his death invariably left Lokoga within six hours, which meant there was always efficiency and good organization present. In addition to this there was a thoroughly good system of training recruits and young soldiers, good ranges, good instructors, a good band, and all those things which go to make good *morale*. Duties at the headquarters of a battalion of the "Waffs" afforded much more facility for acquiring military knowledge and sagacity than ever could be the case with a regiment in England, as in Africa we had the men and we trained them ourselves for war and led them in war. We had no real "dud" officers on the Niger of the kind one found to exist in France, more particularly in the senior grades, during the Great War, yet many of our officers were Militia-men, whose services had been secured when regular officers were striving to get to the Boer War.

When I was at Lokoga the round of a normal day used to be: parade 6.30 a.m.; breakfast 7.45 a.m.; orderly-room, company duties, parades, etc., 9 a.m. to 12 noon; lunch 12 noon; sleep till 4 p.m.; polo or parade 4 to 5.30 p.m.; cocktails 5.30 to 7.30 p.m.; mess 8 p.m., followed by sing-songs or poker till 1 a.m. The only ladies in the station were the hospital nurses, who carried out their duties with the utmost devotion. The civil servants and senior grade officials were all honorary members of our mess, while the doctors of the West African Medical Service looked after

soldiers and civilians alike, but were regarded by us as part of ourselves.

During my duty at Lokoga in 1902, which was the only time I was ever stationed there, we were inspected by Brigadier-General G. V. Kemball, the first Inspector-General of the enlarged West African Frontier Force, which had not long been brought into being, and which embraced the old Hausa Frontier Police Forces and armed constabularies of Southern Nigeria, Lagos, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and Gambia. Of course, we in Northern Nigeria resented the inclusion of the other forces into the "Waffs." It is always so, but the new scheme was a perfectly sound one. General Kemball had been with the Northern Nigeria forces as commandant prior to his promotion, and was a gunner by profession.

At last the long-looked-for day arrived for us to proceed to Zaria, via boat to Muraji, and from there by march route through the new capital at Zunguru. At Zunguru the 1st W.A.F.F. had their headquarters, and there I met Kempthorne the Adjutant, who belonged to the Royal Scots Fusiliers, who had been at Wellington with me. As in days gone by it had never been possible for anybody of the 2nd battalion to be at the headquarters of the 1st battalion, which had been situated far up the Niger at Jebba, this meeting of the two battalions at Zunguru was unique and consequently convivial.

The plan of operations for the conquest of the Hausa States was based on the idea that Kano should be taken at the outset, and that after that the city of Sokoto should be occupied, while it was hoped that Katsina would surrender after the two former important places had fallen to our arms, a surmise which proved to be correct. The base of operations was constituted at Zunguru, Lieutenant-Colonel Festing being appointed Base Commandant, while an advance base was constituted at Zaria, where a concentration had been ordered to take place. Colonel T. L. M. Morland

was appointed to command the expedition, and had with him Brevet-Major T. A. Cubitt (now Major-General commanding 2nd Division at Aldershot) as his staff officer. At Zaria a composite battalion of infantry under command of Lieutenant-Colonel McClintock, with Captain Kempthorne as his adjutant, was formed, while to safeguard Zaria itself, after the march forward had begun, a company of the 2nd battalion was moved forward from Keffi across the pagan country under command of Captain Percy Short of the Gloucesters. The M.I. company from Kontagora, under my old friend Bertie Porter, of the 19th Hussars, had also moved forward to Zaria, with him being a subaltern, Wallace Wright. As it was decided to increase the establishment of subalterns of M.I. by two, to allow for duties of patrol, I was reposted to M.I., as was a friend of mine, Charles Wells, of the 3rd Hampshires, who had served in the Cape Mounted Rifles for many years and who had fought all through the Boer War as a mounted soldier. I marched up to Zaria with Byng-Hall and his company of the 2nd battalion, leaving him there to take over my M.I. duties.

An officer, now interesting and important, who was in command of the artillery of the expeditionary force, was a subaltern called Spinks, who is now Spinks Pasha and Sirdar of the Egyptian Army.

Although the number of British officers who took part in this important campaign of annexation could not have numbered more than about twenty in all, we found that Old Wellingtonians among us numbered six; Percy Short, Lowther (who subsequently died in Egypt), Kempthorne (who died in East Africa), F. H. Romilly (who was killed in the war), Dudley Carleton (now Lord Dorchester) and myself.

The fire strength of a force of this sort was greater than it would appear from its numerical strength, owing to the presence of Maxim guns in large quantities, while the artillery added greatly to the power of the whole.

The country between Zaria and Kano was quite open and covered with low bush and scrub, while here and there a rocky hill intervened, which made our M.I. work easy and interesting.

It was not expected that opposition would be severe; in point of fact, no stiff fighting occurred at all during the whole of the expedition. The first brush with the enemy took place at a walled village called Bebegi, half-way between Zaria and Kano, where some mounted men had been left by the Hausa forces for purposes of observation.

The first sight of Kano was, to me, a disappointment. The city was said to measure some twelve miles in circumference, surrounded by a high mud wall, in front of which was a deep, wide moat. The walls were of considerable strength, being in places perhaps twenty feet thick. The main gate of exit towards Zaria was well fortified and flanked with covering battlements. We marched across the open and cultivated space which generally surrounds the towns and villages of Hausaland, in square formation, the main gate being eventually assaulted and blown in by Captain S. B. B. Dyer, of the Life Guards, and his company. Not a single horseman charged our square, and in fact the whole performance, from the point of view of fighting, was a distinctly disappointing one. My own particular task throughout the whole day consisted of watching the left flank of the operations, and seeing that horsemen did not escape through the western gates. When I was withdrawn that night at dusk I found that the whole force was ensconced in the Emir's palace, and that the grounds were being used for the picketing of horses. There was a bit of a fight in the palace itself, Captain Dyer being severely wounded by a sword cut. As can readily be imagined, the clearing of a maze of passages, rooms and storehouses, often dark and seldom lit up, which covered an area of many acres, was not done without difficulty and danger. The whole of the buildings of this palace were built of sun-dried

mud, the roofs being flat and composed of heavy beams and plaster, while the ceilings and walls were ornamented with a shiny substance, which gave an appearance of what one would have expected to have come across in the story of the Arabian Nights.

We stayed at Kano about a month, during which the duties of standing patrol, which fell on Wells and myself entirely, were heavy, owing to the other subaltern, Wright, being sick. Occasionally I shot guinea-fowl for the pot with a carbine, by blowing their heads off, which could not be said to be a sporting effort, more particularly as the birds were not wild, but inhabited the areas of deserted native farms and small holdings. On one of these occasions, when riding home, our saddles festooned with birds, I passed Colonel Morland and Tom Cubitt out for a ride. The former asked me if I had paid for the guinea-fowl, and both seemed dubious when I said I had. We looked upon the matter from an entirely different light. If the Colonel meant payment in money, then I had not paid for them, but if he meant, as I did, that I had paid dearly in patience and ammunition supplied by the Government, then I had paid for them very dearly. In any case he was not above eating them!

General Kembball, it will be remembered, was in the offing on inspection duty just prior to our departure from the base. In the constitution of the newly formed and enlarged West African Frontier Force it had been ordained that, if troops of two colonies should be operating together, the Inspector-General might assume command of the expedition. Suddenly General Kembball turned up at Kano, just prior to our advance to Sokoto, and assumed command of the Kano-Sokoto campaign. This state of affairs was brought about by the introduction of troops from Southern Nigeria into Northern Nigeria, despite the fact that they were never used against the enemy, there being no need.

A W.A.F.F. force at Argungu, which had been watch-

ing the behaviour of Sokoto from afar, had been ordered to co-operate with us on our approach to that city, and actually to join us prior to the battle, which was quite right. I never could understand why there should have been any need for the introduction of a general to the chief command over Colonel Morland's head, save for motives which were not apparent to a practised military eye, and which the situation did not apparently warrant. Friction, which was blatantly apparent to every officer, was caused by this expansion. General Kemball, who, as Major-General Sir G. Kemball, figured prominently in the Mesopotamian campaign during the Great War, decided to accompany Colonel Morland's column to Sokoto, with his staff officer, Major Lyon, R.A., who during the Great War held various posts which called for tact and diplomacy. He had to use these precious gifts not a little on the Kano-Sokoto campaign.

The chief feature of the march to Sokoto was its uneventfulness and the scarcity of water, which latter made things very difficult and uncomfortable. So far as our daily marches were concerned we were completely tied to the wells, water-holes and occasional river-beds, in which we had to dig for water. The process of watering the horses was sometimes almost unending, and lasted for hours. Despite these hardships, if such they may be called, the column covered the ground well, without mishap. One very waterless belt was encountered, which necessitated a forced M.I. march of, so far as I can remember, a night, a whole day and a bit of another night before water was reached. Bertie Porter and I were left behind with half the M.I. to cover the rear of the column, and overtake it when it was through the waterless zone, while Wallace Wright and Charles Wells went on ahead with the remainder of the M.I. to secure the water and cover the front and exposed right flank.

I shall never forget arriving at the end of that long waterless march. For miles we could see the glow of camp-

fires, which denoted that the column was bivouacked near water, in comfort, while we had used all ours, which we carried with us in skins, and Porter and I had eaten the last tin of sun-warmed peaches between us in order to appease our thirst. The sight of the glow evidently proved too strong for Porter, as he galloped on alone for the last few miles and left me to bring in the horses and men. I hove up at Colonel Morland's mess tent almost done, while Tom Cubitt handed me a long cool whisky and sparklet, which, I believe, was the nicest, most refreshing, and certainly the most comforting drink I have ever had in my life.

After that I went to my own tent, which had been prepared for me, as we had sent on all our luggage with the main body, and sat down in a camp-chair, calling at the same time for my boy to pull off my riding boots. Porter was by this time in another chair close by, doing the same thing. We both fell off to sleep as we sat, till we were found by Tom Cubitt, who had come round to tell Porter that Wright and Wells, who were still out on the flank, had been attacked by, it was at the time thought, vast hordes of Fulani horsemen, and that Porter was to send out relief after the horses and men were rested. Porter started off early in the morning with most of the men, leaving me behind, as my temperature went up for twelve hours on account of the reactionary effect of the trying march. I was forced to call in the aid of the doctor—Langley, now dead, a real good little fellow, who became P.M.O. of the Gold Coast later—to get it down.

Wallace Wright was ill when he was attacked, and had in fact depended very greatly on the help afforded to him in many ways by my pal Wells, who had prepared the zariba himself, with his own hands. The little party returned to camp intact later in the day with Porter, but all three seemed to me very reticent.

It was, however, surmised, after Wright had written a special report regarding the action at the request of General

Kemball, that he would probably get a brevet-majority on attaining the rank of captain, and that Charles Wells would get a D.S.O., or the other way about. Some months later, to our surprise, a telegram was received at Zaria, Wright and Porter being at home on leave at the time, saying that Wright had been awarded the highest honour that a soldier can ever hope to obtain—the V.C.—and that Wells had got nothing. Porter very rightly received a D.S.O. for his services, as he had commanded the M.I. with dash and ability. Wright undoubtedly stood to fight, and thus showed initiative, but it is difficult to see what else he could have done, as, had he withdrawn, I suppose the horsemen, who were said to have numbered hundreds or thousands, would have come on and attacked the main body in bivouac or on the march.

I never quarrel with what people get in the nature of awards, as their good fortune does little or no harm to anybody, but I do quarrel when, through the sin of omission, a good man goes unrewarded for what he obviously deserves. In this case it was unthinkable to me that when two white men, both subalterns, and a handful of native soldiers, had withstood the shock of a desperate charge, such as had been described, that one white man should get a V.C. and the other nothing, particularly when it was common knowledge that the one who had been thus neglected had done a great deal of useful work.

Four years ago, when in Cairo, I had been dining in the company of the Sirdar of the Egyptian Army, Spinks Pasha, who, as has already been said, was a gunner subaltern in this column. Naturally, conversation turned to the old Nigerian days, as we had not since met. In discussing this action in which Wright got his V.C., he told me a very interesting fact appertaining to the peculiarities of the Fulani horsemen, which I had not observed. Spinks, after the capture of Sokoto, which took place very shortly after Wright's battle, returned with his guns direct to winter

quarters at Zunguru, and in doing so made a slight detour, so as to look at the battlefield where Wright had frustrated the intentions of the enemy hordes. To his surprise, the Fulanis, who had been hard pressed and busily engaged at Sokoto in the meanwhile, had cleared up the battlefield, burying their dead and most of their horses. Wright and Wells had practically no casualties.

On arrival at some native irrigation, close to Sokoto, we were joined by the Argungu column under Captain Merrick, a garrison gunner, who was killed flying in the pioneer days of aviation. At that time an Anglo-French boundary commission was delineating the frontier between Nigeria and French Sudan, under the leadership of Colonel Elliot, R.E., and Captain Molle, a very distinguished French officer of the Colonial Army, who was subsequently killed in action. As we also had a native officer of the Egyptian Army attached to our column, for purposes of contact and intelligence, our little force was quite international in character.

It was in the Argungu area in 1901 that Charlie Keyes, of the Indian Army, who was a big boy at Wellington with me, was so barbarously murdered by French white deserters, who had crossed the frontier in search of plunder and to escape arrest for desertion. The true story of the tragedy was never known, but it was supposed that Keyes, on receiving complaints from natives in British territory that their cattle were being driven off by the deserters, proceeded to a village where he had located them, and went in to talk to them and arrest them, unarmed, as he wished to treat them as foreign white men in a coloured man's country, having previously warned them that he was coming. The rest we know. The murder came as a great shock, and created a great sensation at a time when our friendship with France was none too strong, owing to the Fashoda incident, the rush for territory in Nigeria, and the South African War. The men were captured and tried by a judge,

specially sent up from the Coast for the purpose, and, on being found guilty, were sentenced to be hanged. My friend John Eaglesome, the Director of Public Works, had actually erected a special scaffold for their benefit, when word came from home that they were to be handed over to the French, which was done.

Charlie Keyes was a brother of Admiral Sir Roger Keyes, R.N. Their mother, Lady Keyes, used to be very kind to me during her visits to her son, a curly-haired, good-looking boy, at Wellington, while their father, General Sir Charles Keyes, knew my people well in India. Little did I imagine when I looked at Keyes at Wellington, one Speech Day, standing with his sister, watching a cricket match in which he was playing, that a few years later I should receive a warning message, while on detachment in Nigeria, saying that I was to keep on the look-out for his murderers.

As the two columns had now effected a junction, General Kemball had a more definitely defined *locus standi* than he had possessed while on Colonel Morland's column, and accordingly ordered a reconnaissance in force towards Sokoto, on the afternoon before the advance, which was carried out by M.I., supported by infantry. General Kemball and Colonel Morland accompanied this reconnaissance. We drew the enemy horsemen out across the sandy desert, which surrounded the city, the more brave of them charging right into the ranks of the M.I., which were extended for scouting purposes. One of these horsemen rode straight for Charles Wells full tilt, with drawn sword, while he was looking in another direction, and would probably have killed him had not Major Lyon, who was not far distant, shouted out to Charles to "look out," which he did by jamming his spurs into his pony's flanks and plunging out of the way in the nick of time, following which the man was shot.

It being obvious that the Sokoto men would put up a

better show than did the men of Kano, the reconnaissance was broken off, after which we withdrew to camp. Having left all the baggage in zariba under escort at the water-holes, the whole expedition set forth next morning for Sokoto, which was not far distant, soon after dawn, in square formation. As a good view and field of fire could be obtained across the sand for miles round there was no point in using the M.I. for purposes of scouting or observation, while their presence inside the square would prevent them from screening the field of fire. We accordingly closed up and advanced inside the square, leading our horses. As all our horses were stallions, it can be imagined what their behaviour was like on parade or in the horse-lines. For this reason we always took up twice as much room in camp as would have been the case if we had been mounted on geldings or mares.

As we approached close to the city hordes of horsemen and footmen armed with swords, spears, old guns and bows and arrows appeared, charging the square over and over again, only to be mown down by machine-gun and carbine fire. These men faced certain death with fanatic bravery to the beating of drums and tom-toms, the sounding of shrill blasts on horns, and the chanting of extracts from the Koran. The horsemen urged their horses right up to the bayonet points of the kneeling Hausa soldiers. At last, after a period which seemed like hours, as so much was crowded into it, the struggle died down, save for the menacing attitude of a group of men, who bore above their heads a big flag, on which was worked an inscription in Arabic (the Hausa language is written in Arabic characters). These men would not let anyone approach them, and as they continued to direct badly-aimed fire on to the square, they were dealt with drastically, all being picked off by specially aimed rifle-fire till none remained. As each standard-bearer was killed he was replaced by another, till the flag fell on a heap of dead Hausa humanity. At the

moment when the last man fell Colonel McClintock and Captain Porter ran out of the square across the sand and raced for the flag, the latter winning. At that moment the M.I. were ordered to pursue the rabble. Captain Porter thereupon tore the flag from its staff and tucked it away somewhere for safety. Mounting hurriedly, we all galloped off in different directions, with orders to return to a previously indicated camp at dusk.

As I was wending my way back to camp at the head of my section of M.I. later in the day, just as the sun was disappearing behind some palm trees, my eyes lit upon what looked like a large bit of cloth on the ground. Jumping off my horse I picked it up and examined it. To me it had the appearance of the dirty bit of bunting for which so many brave men had died earlier in the day, and which Porter had acquired. I put it through my wallet straps and thought no more about it. On return to camp, after attending to the horses, I went over to my tent, and had a tub and some food. Later an officer came over to our corner and asked Captain Porter for the war flag of the Emir for Colonel Morland, as such this flag proved to be. Porter had to say he had lost it, which created an uproar, the tradition being that no Emir could rule in Sokoto who was not in possession of that flag. The Emir had fled, and on the morrow it was proposed to install another in his place with regal formality. The flag was required, in order that tradition should be complied with.

When I heard this discussion about the flag I got up from my long chair and walked over to where my saddle was lying in the horse lines, in order to produce the flag and find out if it was the right one. Imagine my horror when I found my horse-boy lying dead on the ground, in close proximity to my saddle, with a dagger piercing his heart. The flag had disappeared. I turned in to bed to sleep or think, saying nothing about my loss,

while the other horse-boys buried their pal. Perhaps they understood.

There was no rest for the wicked that night, as, shortly after I had dropped off to sleep I was awakened by an orderly, who brought me a chit, saying I was to proceed at once along a certain path with a guide and my section of M.I., in order to meet "The Chief," as the High Commissioner, Sir Frederick Lugard, was termed, who was on his way up and not far distant, and escort him back to camp. We rode till dawn, when we came upon His Excellency at breakfast, while camp was being struck. I breakfasted with Sir Frederick and his secretary, Hopkins, and told him all about the battle. Sir Frederick had done a very bold thing. Without escort, and depending entirely on the elements of surprise and secrecy, he had trekked up from Zunguru alone, save for the presence of his secretary, servants and carriers, in order to be present at the installation of the new Emir. "The Chief" did not appear to mind a bit and, in fact, thought nothing of it, although "Hoppy," as his secretary was called, said he had had a few sleepless nights and anxious moments, as there were so many fugitives and hostile bands about. It is generally so for subordinates, when the safety of the mighty is at stake!

We reached camp without incident. Later in the day the High Commissioner held a palaver, at which I was present, inside the city, when he installed the new Emir with pomp and ceremony. There was, however, no war flag to grace and add validity to the proceedings in the eyes of the populace. The story of the war flag will crop up from time to time in these pages, and will show how often a big thing may depend on a little incident. In this case the non-possession of the flag brought endless trouble in its wake, which was not finally settled till the flag was secured.

The fugitive Emir went about his business of moulding

a "Diehard" band of followers (who differ from our own politicians of that ilk, insomuch as they were always prepared to die for their cause) with energy, as will be seen later.

On the day following the installation the expeditionary force repaired to winter quarters. Bertie Porter and I, accompanied by Langley, as medical officer, escorted "The Chief" round the desert track to Kano, via Katsina, where the Emir of the latter place made formal submission. During the trek I had a good opportunity of studying that great Colonial administrator, who is now our representative on the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations and a member of the House of Lords. Without any intention of being disrespectful it may be said, in the words of Colonel Morland, "He was a beggar to walk!" With rolled-up shirt-sleeves and handkerchief round neck he could, and did, walk all day, defying the sun, ignoring his horse and turning two marches into one. That, and fair treatment for all and great understanding of the natives, made Northern Nigeria what it is to-day.

I was left at Katsina for a few days with my section of M.I. behind a zariba, till Captain "Jock" Mackenzie, V.C., arrived with a company of the 1st W.A.F.F. to take my place. Mackenzie was a great little soldier. Having served for many years as a N.C.O. in a Highland Regiment and as a British N.C.O. in Nigeria, of quite humble birth but good education, he gained his V.C. and a commission on the field in the Ashanti Expedition of 1900 for a first-class bit of real valour. Promoted major into the Bedfords shortly before the outbreak of the Great War, he was killed at the battle of Loos.

When I got back to Kano from Katsina I found that great changes had taken place in a short time. A Residency had been built, the troops had been moved out of the Emir's palace, and a state of normality was taking the place of war.

Kano differed from Sokoto in one respect. Kano was, and is, commercially powerful. Sokoto was, and is, the spiritual and traditional head of all the Hausa States. That is why they ran away at Kano and fought at Sokoto. It is the same in England to-day. One can quite well imagine the grand old Lord Davidson of Lambeth (ex-Archbishop of Canterbury) dying with his followers on account of the faith that was in him; one can hardly imagine a merchant prince doing the same.

Dudley Carleton, now Lord Dorchester, who was Master of the Garth, had been quartered at Kano, and with him, as Resident, was a Yeoman, Captain Phillips, a good fellow, who died of fever later. Carleton was fond of practical jokes, and one day, dressing himself up as a Fulani, he sought to gain admission to Phillips on some pretext or other, his original idea, I believe, being to rise from the floor where he was sitting, native fashion, with legs crossed in front of Phillips' table and make a rush for him. Phillips afterwards told me that if this had been done he would have shot Carleton dead, as he had a cocked and loaded revolver levelled at him underneath the top of the table. Instead of this, however, Phillips taking Carleton's silence for impudence (he could not speak the language, save for a few words of salutation and such-like), threw the latter violently into the guard-room, to be kept under observation! It served as a good lesson on the subject of practical jokes in war.

The firm, fair policy of Sir Frederick Lugard in relation to individual soldiers and collective military effort, and conduct towards the inhabitants of the country, was the cause of much strength being gained to the Empire over a vast land. Four illustrations will suffice to convey the importance of my meaning to the reader. Would that Sir Frederick had been in supreme control in Ireland in 1920-21!

At Kano a native soldier entered the market, stole

money, robbed a native merchant and became embroiled in a fight in which another native was killed. The native soldier was tried by court martial, found guilty, sentenced to death and shot by Maxim gun fire. I believe all military executions should be carried out by machine-gun fire, as it is easier, more humane, less exacting and more accurate than the present method of execution by means of a firing-party. That was speedy justice, and as the execution was witnessed by leading native officials of Kano and the relatives of the murdered man, needless to say our prestige rose very high in a single bound.

Some men of a company of infantry, on the way up to the concentration at Zaria, preparatory to the advance on Kano, looted a village. The civil authorities eventually heard about this outrage, and after causing the robbers to be properly and fairly identified, tried them by civil process. The men were sentenced to be flogged and to undergo long terms of imprisonment. They were taken by the police to the village where they had perpetrated the offences and were flogged in front of the whole of the inhabitants, in addition to which some of their deferred pay was handed over by way of restitution.

Major Eustace Crawley, of the 12th Lancers, happened to be the senior officer present at Zaria after the advance had started to Kano. He was asked by the Resident to patrol some adjacent pagan country, the people of which had given some trouble. Major Crawley took out all the men he could gather together, including gunners, and did as he was asked to do, in addition to which he burnt and shelled villages. As it was held that such drastic action was unnecessary and excessive, a reproof was administered, which was of such a nature as to clarify the position of officers and their relationship to the civil authority.

Crawley became very ill later on, after I had returned to Zaria, and almost died of dysentery. As we had no medical officer we had to send for Dr. Miller, of a mission

H

station some fifty miles or less away, who told us what to do, while we took it in turns to nurse him by night. Eventually he became well enough to be carried down in a hammock to Zunguru, his life being thus saved. Crawley was killed in France. His prowess in the field of sport is too well known to need mention, but with it all he did not know the meaning of the word "side," and was a sincere friend. As I was his adjutant at Zaria, I know.

A native soldier, while on escort duty between Bauchi and Zaria, murdered and robbed a villager. The escort was under the command of a native N.C.O. Eventually the Resident, in his rounds, found out about this murder, the man being properly and fairly identified, tried by the civil court, found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging. As all sentences of capital punishment awarded by civil courts had to be confirmed by the High Commissioner at Zunguru, confirmation took a long time, and in this case the man, who was kept in our guard-room for safety, almost forgot that he was under sentence of death till one day I had to tell him that he would be taken to the place where he had committed the murder, there to be hanged. We used to feed the unfortunate fellow and throw him a cigarette occasionally, when passing. It fell to the lot of my school-fellow, F. H. Romilly, of the Welch, popularly known as "The Egg," to take this wretched man to the place of execution and hang him. What happened I do not know, as I never asked, but I received "The Egg's" certificate that death had taken place. If I had had to do the unpleasant job I should have shot him.

Is it to be wondered at that an Empire such as ours is great and remains great, when the directing mentality, and the mentality responding to direction, is of such a high order on the whole; that justice is administered thousands of miles from civilization, in the midst of the bush, the jungle, the desert or on the veld, in the same way and with

the same certainty as if the court had sat in London, instead of, perhaps, in some mud hovel in a far-off village? It is only occasionally that we fall from the pinnacle which I have drawn, and then we appear to totter, but only for a moment. Peculiarly enough, when we do fall into errors, it is not, as a rule, on account of our treatment of so-called inferiors, such as the pagans of Piko, or the Bedouins of Bokka, that we trip up, but in connection with our dealings with such people as Oscar Slater, McCurtain, or Miss Savidge, who are our equals, not only in the racial sense but in the communal one. Why is it? Is it because we cannot agree to differ on minor matters? Perhaps the advice of St. John Ervine is not so easy to follow, when he suggests that "we should agree to put up with each other's tosh."

It had been decided that a mounted infantry battalion should be raised at Zaria directly we got back to that place. At first the battalion was to consist of the usual headquarters staff and four companies, which in the next financial year was to be increased to seven companies. The time for such expansion was not propitious, as the rains were shortly to be upon us, while there were no stables, veterinary stores, veterinary surgeons or officers. However, in the Army one has to make the best of things and "get on with it."

On my arrival at Zaria from Katsina and Kano I found Bertie Porter and Wallace Wright preparing to go home, while newcomers had arrived on the scene. As Wright had been appointed to be the first adjutant of the M.I., I was deputed to act for him during his absence on leave in England. Dudley Carleton had come in from a horse coping and foraging expedition to Gaia; Charles Wells was, as usual, present and unperturbed, while Jim Mackenzie, of the Blues, made up our foursome.

With a few more newcomers to help with the duties of routine, we were looking forward to a pleasant wet

season, when the cloud of war broke upon us once more like a bomb from the sky.

I was sent for suddenly by Eustace Crawley, and told that the civil authorities had reported that the ex-Emir of Sokoto was up and doing, and that he was trekking across the Hausa States at full speed, and had crossed the main road between Zaria and Kano, proclaiming a holy war as he went. I was asked, with my knowledge of the country, what I thought about it, and in reply narrated the story of the Emir's war flag. Crawley was disposed to belittle the serious estimate put on to the situation by the civilians, one of whom, Captain Orr, happened to be a good soldier. Orr is now Governor of the Bahamas.

The result was that I was sent out in pursuit of this rebel mob with twenty-five M.I., no carriers, tent or provisions, save what I could carry on my horses, and, what was far more serious than anything else, only fifty rounds of small arm ammunition per man.

I was young, inexperienced in the art of war, though full of energy and enthusiasm. Crawley had told me to go. It was considered that fifty rounds per man, no tent or food, was all right, so that was sufficient for me. I soon caught up the rebel crowd, which consisted of the whole countryside being driven towards Bauchi, with all their goods and chattels.

For four days I followed, overtaking, overtaking, all the time, and then I came to burnt villages, which was serious for me, as we were living on the country. The fugitive rebel crowd must have covered in time and space four days or sixty miles. Suddenly, one morning at 11 a.m., I struck a fighting bunch of fanatics (it had been impossible to tell which was which), who rounded on us when resting. I had taken all necessary precautions against surprise, but the whole population was against us, thanks to the presence of the Emir's flag in their midst. I lost two men, hit by poisonous arrows, their subsequent and

speedy deaths being too agonizing for words, and over a dozen horses from the same cause. In addition to this I could get no food or forage, even on payment, so I had to commandeer what I could. This led to further trouble and I was again attacked, but managed, with the aid of my resolute native sergeant-major, Dundara, one of the very best of men, who already possessed the D.C.M., to beat off the brunt of the hostile crowds.

But all this time we were expending ammunition, and I was getting ill from exposure, want of food and loss of sleep. Eventually, my strength giving out, my temperature rose, I got a bad case of fever and became unconscious. Dundara and my trusted men got me through to Zaria on an improvised stretcher. I eventually pulled round, having had a narrow escape. Commenting on this to me four years ago in Cairo, Spinks Pasha, the Sirdar, was emphatic in his belief that had I been physically able to go on I would have been "scuppered."

This episode is covered by two lines in Colonel Morland's opening sentence of a dispatch which was published in the *London Gazette* later, after an elaborate expedition had been sent to deal with a situation with which I had been expected to cope with twenty-five men and fifty rounds of ammunition per man.

My old friend of T.M.I. days, "Pompey" Green, who had brought my horse back to me at Fort Wylie on the Tugela, arrived at Zaria and took over command of the station from Eustace Crawley, who was ill. We had come to the conclusion that the rising had assumed very serious proportions. We decided to send every trained mounted infantryman we possessed, under command of Brevet-Major Barlow, to Bauchi. Barlow took with him Christy of the 20th Hussars, and C. C. Maud of the Somersets. All these three officers got the D.S.O. for their work in these operations, Christy and Maud being killed in the Great War. In addition to our M.I. concentration at Bauchi we

sent half a company of infantry to the area of greatest activity, and supported Barlow as well as we could with all that we could send him, relying on the other half of the infantry company and our recruits for the defence of Zaria.

Meanwhile two infantry companies from the east had marched south and west on their own initiative, while a punitive expedition from Lokoga, under command of Major Marsh, of the Royal West Kents, consisting of artillery and infantry, marched north. Major Marsh assumed command of all the British elements in the Bauchi area on arrival, and, after concentration, attacked at Burmi, being killed by a poisoned arrow in the hour of victory. A notification appeared later in the *London Gazette* that had Major Marsh survived he would have been awarded the D.S.O.

The carnage among the rebel ranks was enormous—it always must be so on such occasions—many important people being killed, their bodies being subsequently photographed, copies of which photographs were circulated throughout the length and breadth of Hausaland *pour encourager les autres*. But all was in vain.

The Emir's war flag had not been captured, despite the fact that it was supposed to be at Burmi. In spite of my own personal failure to hang on to the rebels in their initial stage of rebellion, owing to shortage of men, ammunition and supplies, I always felt that the dispatch of the M.I. under Major Barlow, properly supplied with the essentials of life for war, prevented the spread of the revolt till the arrival of Major Marsh and his large force.

We were a happy family at Zaria in 1903. Polo, racing and shooting added to our enjoyment, while work was not neglected. We started the Western Sudan Turf Club, which is, I believe, still in existence, with a subscription of £1 per head, making £20 in all. At the first jump meeting I won the catch-weight chase on a very nice bay pony called Gaia, which I bought from Dudley Carleton for £10 when he went home. Jim Mackenzie bought the

winning ticket for this race in an auction sweep. Mackenzie had come out with Eustace Crawley. He was the brother of Sir Victor Mackenzie of the Scots Guards, and heir to the baronetcy. One afternoon he went out shooting with Julian Hasler and next day was dead. He had eaten a bad tin of sardines, or some such food, which brought on poisoning and fever. On my return home, on my way up to the Lews to shoot, in the winter of 1903, I called at Glen Muick to see the old baronet, who was then alive, and gave him a snapshot of the grave at Zaria. Subsequently, the body was brought home for re-burial in Scotland, under circumstances of great difficulty, owing to native prejudice.

Brevet-Major Julian Hasler of the Buffs arrived up at Zaria before I left for home and assumed command, vice "Pompey" Green, who reverted to command of a company. Both were killed in the Great War, Hasler as a Brigadier and Green as a General Staff officer. I had served with both in South Africa.

Hasler was one of the nicest, easiest, most efficient men to work with that I have ever had the good fortune to serve under. I first met him in Ceylon, when he was A.D.C. to the Governor, Sir West Ridgway. Hasler did very well in Northern Nigeria and eventually became Commandant, vice Colonel Lowry-Cole of the Royal Welch Fusiliers, who was also killed as a brigade commander in the Great War. Hasler obtained a brevet-colonelcy in Nigeria, when he was a captain, which brought him in the early stages of the war into the very first flight. Owing to his sterling qualities, the opportunities which would have certainly come his way, his host of friends (I never heard anybody say a word against "J. H."), his knowledge of *war*, and his ability to apply that knowledge without fuss, there is no saying to what heights he would have towered had he been spared. His early death was a calamity to the Army.

Hasler was a great sportsman. One of the first things he ever said to me in the orderly tent at Zaria, while signing papers, was, "What is there to shoot here, Bull Pup?" I told him, duck, geese, lesser bustard, bush-fowl, green pigeon, guinea-fowl, quail, plover, orabe, gazelle, reed-buck. "Any snipe?" he replied. I shook my head. "I can't understand it," he said. "There should be snipe, and yet I've never seen one in the country." I agreed. That day, before lunch, we had a cast round with our guns, near camp, in some low-lying ground, and brought in nine couple of snipe! We were overjoyed, and occasionally repeated a similar bag, but not often. I think the truth was the snipe moved about a good bit and we only struck them by luck, and, as we had not the local intelligence available, as is often the case in India, where the habits, hopes and desires of the white man are better known, all our efforts were ruled by chance.

I knew the Emir of Zaria pretty well, as in the early days I had acted as Assistant Resident, while in the Burmi Rebellion I used to be brought into direct contact with him, owing to the necessity of obtaining first-hand intelligence by means of question and answer. Through him I used to be told of lakes and swamps where duck abounded. Ammunition used to cause us trouble, but Hasler and I eventually shot for the garrison, as it was important to have fresh food, while we all pooled our gun ammunition. Only in one other place in Nigeria did I strike as many duck; that was near Bida, on one occasion when the sound of a gun had obviously never been heard before, and was accordingly not understood. There the birds came back again and again, but I never shot more than I required for the pot.

Northern Nigeria has to thank Sir Frederick Lugard for its game laws, which he initiated, and which were based on his East African and Indian experience. A good sportsman himself, he approached the problem in the

proper spirit, and knew what he was doing from personal experience.

At the end of 1903 a fairly broad cart track had been levelled and cleared between Zunguru and Zaria. At the same time, a conductor from the Indian transport service arrived at Zaria, having come through with a convoy of bullock carts. Although we did not realize this at the time, this was a very historic event in the history of Northern Nigeria. Never before had the non-travelling public of the native population seen wheeled transport. Now, of course, a train steams into Kano from Lagos, while motors traverse the country on properly prepared roads. My pal, Charles Wells, was the first man to drive a trap at Zunguru in the spring of 1904. He had a special light dog-cart made at home, which, if necessary, could be carried in three or four loads. In this he drove up with his kit from Zunguru to Zaria without mishap, thereby saving about twelve carriers.

I may have been the first acting Customs officer in the Northern States of Nigeria, as, when station staff officer at Zaria, in 1903, I was ordered to tabulate, record and collect Custom duty from the caravans composed of donkeys, horses, goats and carriers, which passed through on their way to Lagos, while a similar method was initiated at Kano for those caravans going north and east into French territory, across the Sahara, to the Mediterranean ports.

The few days I had spent at Katsina in 1903 had brought me in contact with French officers in the fort of Zinder, in French Sudan, just over the frontier, and right well they treated me. I felt ashamed at the time, as I had no stores or whisky, while they had wines and luxuries. They told me their Government paid them badly, but kept them supplied with light wines. This fort of Zinder is not unconnected with the Zinderneuf of that great film, "Beau Geste," after the book by Wren, of which I never tire, while the Tokoto of the same story I have always taken to be Sokoto.

Most good things come to an end, and, although I naturally looked forward to my leave, it was with genuine regret that I left Zaria at the end of the rainy season of 1903 for home.

Much had been accomplished during the year. Territory had been effectively occupied, revolt had been suppressed with rigour but unfailing fairness, the M.I. battalion had been gradually licked into shape, while Wallace Wright had been awarded his V.C., and General Kemball and Colonel Morland had been added to the list of the Bath.

CHAPTER VI

ZARIA

I SPENT the winter of 1903-4 in shooting and deer-stalking with my old friend, Mrs. Platt, in the Lews (she is doing precisely the same thing to-day, in the same place, in the same way, twenty-five years after); in getting engaged to be married; attending the veterinary course at the Aldershot school, and hunting in Ireland; in addition to which I passed my "C," or practical examination for promotion to captain at the Curragh. The president of my board for this examination was Colonel Rycroft of the Hussars, while the most intelligent member on it appeared to me to be Major Sir Philip Chetwode of the 19th Hussars. An officer under examination can usually judge pretty closely and accurately the capabilities of the examiners, some of whom sometimes do not know as much as those being examined.

Colonel Rycroft became a General and commanded a Division in France. I next met him in a demolished trench opposite Thiépval village just before the start of the battle of the Somme in 1916.

Sir Philip Chetwode is known to all as the cavalry leader in Palestine, and later as Military Secretary, Member of the Army Council, G.O.C. in C. Aldershot Command and C.-in-C. designate in India. General Thorneycroft always used to say Sir Philip was the only cavalry officer at the Curragh who interested himself about the other arms of the service as a regimental officer, as he used to go out and watch the General's 14th Infantry Brigade at training.

I always brought home a good many animals for the Zoological Gardens, and at this particular time had several crown birds, marabouts, a gazelle and antelopes at the establishment in Regent's Park, while my fox-terrier dog, who had accompanied me all through the Kano-Sokoto campaign was in quarantine, owing to the regulations in force against rabies. This dog always rode in front of me or on a spare saddle, on which my light-weight household boy, Alassen, also rode. Parrots, they say, live long. A grey coloured variety, which I brought home from Sierra Leone in 1904, is still alive and talking. He did not share the fate of a hundred others which I bought as a speculation at the same time. I had been told that I could make at least seven and six on every bird landed safely home, and as I would only expend a fiver on the hundred I thought the idea worth while following up. Unfortunately, shortly after leaving the Canaries, when the nights were getting cold, a ship's officer, thinking he would be very kind and thoughtful, covered up the crates with a huge, heavy tarpaulin, the result being that every bird was suffocated to death!

On arrival back at Lokoga for my third tour with the W.A.F.F., I was put up by Julian Hasler, who had been appointed to the command of the 2nd battalion. After a brief stay with my old Commanding Officer I proceeded to Zunguru, where I found Tom Cubitt, the Brigade-Major, who had been appointed to the command of the M.I. Although Zunguru was the centre of civilization, so far as that doubtful asset was obtainable, it was by no means a health resort or free from the adventures of the bush. Fever was rife, perhaps owing to the recent clearing of bush or virgin soil, while wild animals still abounded in close proximity to the bungalows. Leopards, wild cats, and even lions were shot. Captain W. C. N. Hastings, of my regiment, with whom I soldiered in the South African War, shot a lion on the polo ground early one morning,

within a few yards of the Government Buildings, while on his way to shoot birds. Such events were uncommon but not without precedent. I shot a leopard and three wild cats in the barracks at Bida, while at Keffi a lion remained for months undisturbed near a path close to the town till shot by a white man.

It had been arranged that John Eaglesome, Tom and I should trek up together to Zaria. We started off in due course, and then the foundation was laid for a story which was told against me for many years. Tom Cubitt never used to drink any alcohol till after sundown, after which he often made up for lost time. He generally used to preface his first drink with the remark, "Here's boo! First drink to-day, 5 p.m." Now, we used to start off early in the morning, when Tom Cubitt was on trek, which meant striking camp about 5 a.m. The previous night, after Tom had turned in, I had expressed my intention to John Eaglesome of not striking at 5 a.m. Tom had heard all the conversation, and had told his orderly to get my tent let down over me if I wasn't on the move. As a matter of fact my boy, Alassen, told me what had been arranged, so I got up, dressed, and was out for breakfast at the usual time. Tom and John were both sitting down with a smile on their faces, when my boy brought me a whisky and soda, a prevalent custom of the country. I took the glass and merely said, looking towards Tom, "Here's boo! First drink to-day, 5 a.m." There was nothing really in it, but my little gesture apparently turned the whole laugh against Tom and stuck to me for years.

Things were now very much better for us at Zaria. The whole camp had been moved farther north to constantly-running water, huts, offices, stables and sick lines made of mud had been erected, and on the whole things began to be more ship-shape.

Two very good army veterinary surgeons had been appointed to look after the health of the horses, of which

horse sickness, derived from the bite of the tsetse fly, had taken a great toll. We had a certain yearly estimated grant for remounts, of course. What the vets. used to do was to test the blood of any horse looking off colour, and if the germ was found to be present, as was often the case, that horse used to be fattened up, groomed, so that he should acquire a splendidly glossy coat and look fit, after which he was put up to auction with others and bought by a native who didn't know! The horse invariably died, but we kept our remount vote down, and were able to buy more mounts with the proceeds. It was all very bad, of course, I suppose, but it answered, and the natives did not seem to mind, as they had always been used to horses dying like flies.

We had a very good lot of officers in the M.I. at this time, among them being Cockburn of the Royal Welch, Porter, of whom we have already heard, Jim McCulloch of the 16th Lancers, Ces. Fane of the 12th, Charles Wells, T. C. R. Higgins, now an Air Force officer of repute, who was once a sailor in the days of his youth, Blackwood, who was killed near Sokoto in 1906, Anderson and A. C. McLachlan of the 18th Hussars, who was adjutant, and others too numerous to mention. The Quartermaster's Department boasted two quartermasters, one of them being George Condon, of blessed memory, a real good fellow, known as such in the five continents, and the best tonic I ever had the luck to come up against.

Tom Cubitt had promoted me to be a temporary captain by this time, and, as such, I raised a company at headquarters, having Blackwood and Higgins as my subalterns. Blackwood was very much older than most of us, as he had received his commission late. A son of Captain Sir Francis Blackwood, R.N., he had been a tea-planter in Ceylon, and had taken part in the gold rush to the Klondyke before receiving a direction commission. Annihilated a year later near Sokoto, with the whole of

my company, he died game, as only one of Nelson's Blackwoods could.

My final year spent at Zaria was uneventful. We were inspected by the Inspector-General, Brigadier-General Kemball, and received His Excellency the High Commissioner, Sir Frederick Lugard, who was accompanied by his brother, Captain Lugard, on his way through, during which time I was in command of the station, as Tom Cubitt was away at Lake Chad, where he had met "The Chief" by appointment.

Having passed my "C" examination, I took the opportunity of sitting for "D" at Zaria, which I also passed. The papers were sent out from home. In order to assemble a board for the examination Colonel Festing, "The Rat," who was Acting Commandant of the Northern Nigeria Regiment, had to come up from Zunguru for the express purpose, which he thoroughly enjoyed. With me sat Ccs. Fane of the 12th Lancers, then a subaltern, who had recently been tried by general court martial, with others, and acquitted, in connection with what was then known as the Mount Nelson Hotel ragging case. Questions had been asked in Parliament about this case, a lot of fuss having been made of nothing. An offensive individual at the hotel had been merely put in his place, in a manner which he thoroughly deserved. Civilians often do not understand soldiers.

"The Rat" sat through my tedious days of examination fortified by creature comforts.

I was very pleased at passing for promotion, as I had not been to a crammer and had coached myself.

Tom Cubitt always held a great grip on his men and on the station, and although I think we all drank too much between 5 p.m. and midnight ("Never shirk the booze," abbreviated as "N.S.T.B.," was the battalion motto), when he was controlling affairs we somehow used to live it down. Most of us had been choked off by Tom at one time or

another, none more than me, yet it was soon over and forgotten. I certainly learnt from Tom how to be "on parade and off parade" in a flash. Alas! the time came for him to go home, and with his departure came a crash. The station went to pieces. Some of us drank all day, formed ourselves into cliques and became demoralized. My last three months at Zaria, without Tom Cubitt, and unled, spoilt my military career—for a time. I arrived home in England full of fever and cocktails, supported by sips of champagne instead of food, and was in the doctor's hands for months. Never could I have believed that the personality of one man could make such a difference to a team, or the career of an individual.

Alcohol is a very dangerous narcotic, because it comes upon its victim stealthily, like a wolf in sheep's clothing. I am not saying that everybody should abstain from drinking alcohol just because alcohol knocked *me* out for a time, as such a contention would be stupid, but what I do say is that the people, and more particularly the youth, of this country should receive instruction, in season and out of season, in regard to the dangers which lie behind alcohol. It is not necessary to regularly get drunk in order to be an excessive drinker, as the effect of alcohol on the individual largely depends on the physical make-up of that individual. A man who regularly gets blind drunk once a month is better off, and will, in the long run, stand the strain of years better than the man whose head is so strong that he does not get drunk, despite the fact that he does himself well, or too well, daily. I, from budding youth to early manhood, had been accustomed to see men, not women, "doing themselves well" daily, year in and year out, and when I went into the world alone I really thought that plenty of good beer, good port, good whisky, good liqueurs and good champagne, if I could get it, was quite "the thing," and as necessary as food or sleep! I was, therefore, a very unsuitable person to go to Nigeria, where

excessive drinking was notorious. I was, as it were, a good full seed thrown on to very fertile ground. I make this statement in no sense as an excuse for my actions, as, after all, all men must be responsible for what they do, till they become mad or mentally deficient, and, besides, to seek excuse is unmanly, but I stress the point because it is as well for the welfare of the Empire that we should have as few "full seeds" as possible, and no fertile ground on which to sow them. Spinks Pasha told me in Cairo in 1924 that the reason why he did not return to Nigeria was because the drink habit among certain people was too strong and might have grown on him.

There were three men at Zaria during the year 1905 who are deserving of note: Huddleston, till lately G.O.C. the Sudan Defence Force, and then a rather old subaltern of the Dorsets, who had received his commission from the ranks of the Coldstream Guards, was a real good fellow and, of course, a sahib. Not brilliant, but brave, sound and tactful, he was bound to get on. Adams, popularly known as "Adamu" (a Hausa name), was our doctor. He was also a poet. Whether he was a better poet than a doctor, or vice versa, I cannot say, but he filled his place with us and we loved him. He spent his whole life on the Coast and is now enjoying his pension. Carr, our vet., was a character. He is now dead. Always ill but never ill, what he did not know about his job was not worth knowing. He had been on Lord Downe's personal staff in the South African War, and with him had travelled the world in connection with the Remount Department.

During my three tours in Nigeria I had seen great Imperial strides made towards the stabilizing of that country, and I was glad to have been able to take part in a small way in that development. The tin mines in the Bauchi area had begun to take tangible shape, and the first new trading company, run by two ex-officials of the Administration, Donnisthorpe and Esmond-White, called

the Kano-London Trading Company, had been operating in the newly pacified country. The seeds of the fruits of wise administration, which are being gathered now, were being sown.

The Coast threw up some good men during the war, of whom not much had been expected. Three of these have contributed largely to the welfare of the Empire, and were in Nigeria during some or most of the time I was there. With two of them I frequently travelled on board ship. All three have since been knighted and one is a peer. Moorhouse, Trenchard and Salmond are their names. "The Moorhen," as he was called, for a time commanded a battalion of the Southern Nigeria Regiment; then became a Colonial civil servant and later returned to the Army during the war, when he repeated the same gallant deeds in the field that he had performed on the Coast. Trenchard, then a Captain and Brevet-Major in the Royal Scots Fusiliers, served under "Moorhen" with distinction, and, needless to say, learnt to fly as soon as it was possible to do so. After there had been a fuss in the Flying Corps in 1918 Sir Hugh Trenchard was appointed to command the 121st Infantry Brigade in the 40th Division, in which I commanded the 119th Infantry Brigade at the time, although he never took over the command. It was thought at the time to be a political wangle.

Salmond, otherwise known as "The Fish" (or was it his brother?), was differently situated. At school with me, he cut no ice on the Niger, and was pronounced a "dud" by those better able to judge whisky than men!

CHAPTER VII

FLUX

NOBODY wants to hear about another person's wedding, but mine in 1905 was noticeable for the fact that it was packed with men, most of whom were killed, or did well, in the Great War.

I did a certain amount of soldiering with the 4th battalion of my regiment in Ireland and at Aldershot, and was eventually re-absorbed into the 2nd battalion at Guernsey and Alderney. For a keen soldier, as was I, the Aldershot period was most enjoyable. There one knew exactly where one was. The men were present to train, the programmes were progressive, and at the end of a strenuous summer period of work one had one's leave. Moreover, we were at the same time learning and teaching the lessons of the South African War.

Tom Cubitt, who had joined the Staff College, was the best man of his year. I love the story about him, which, true or untrue, is worth recording. At the end of his pass-out some big gun from the War Office was down at Camberley, patting the students on the back and uttering words of wisdom, when Tom, the star turn, was asked, after dinner, by the great man, what he thought of the Staff College. "Well, sir," came the unexpected reply, "if a man isn't a ——— before he comes here he is sure to be one by the time he passes out!" The subsequent conversation is not recorded. What, I suppose, our very able, practical, and highly unconventional, present Divisional Commander of the 2nd Division at Aldershot

wished to convey was, that the greatest danger to the Staff College is a swollen head.

As my name had been entered on the list of those nominated for permission to compete for the Staff College, for which I had been working while I was stationed at Aldershot in 1906, it cannot be said that I repeat this story, with its moral, as one possessed of ideas hostile to the Staff College. Far from it.

During my stay at Aldershot I was not well. I still suffered from malaria contracted in Nigeria. I was doping myself continually with nips of brandy, whisky, and other so-called stimulants, to keep my pecker up, and was being treated by a civilian doctor. Those were the days when few officers consulted a R.A.M.C. doctor, unless they had to for the purpose of getting a certificate. In addition to this I was short of money, as I had reverted to the regiment as a subaltern, which meant serving on six shillings and sixpence a day instead of £600 a year.

At the end of 1906 a great blow befell the regiment. We were to lose two regular battalions under the retrenchment scheme, which meant that my chance of getting promotion, for which I had qualified, was deferred for a number of years. In 1906 my cousin, Maurice FitzGerald, Knight of Kerry, who had been Equerry and Extra-Equerry to H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught for many years, spoke to the Duke about me, with the result that, in consideration of war services, H.R.H. had caused a note to be made against my name at the War Office, in case advancement should be possible. I fear this disbandment of two battalions made me lose heart, with disastrous consequences.

But in the meantime another incident occurred, which sent the blood running through my veins. I was on leave at Birmingham in February, 1906, with my Nigerian friend, Charles Wells, when we read in the paper one morning that my old company of Nigerian M.I., commanded by my subaltern, Blackwood, had been surprised while on the

march, and that Blackwood and two civilian residents, and all the men, had been killed at Satiru, near Sokoto. It turned out afterwards that Blackwood, who had recently moved up to Sokoto with the company, had been requested by the Resident to accompany the civil authority, with as many men as possible, on a tour, by way of making a demonstration. Blackwood accordingly took the whole of his company out, less his British N.C.O., and enough men for guard duties in the fort. The whole party was, apparently, surprised by a vast horde of rebel fanatics while watering the horses, with girths loosened and bits out of the horses' mouths, and was massacred almost to a man.

Immediately on reading this news I got into the train for London, went to the Colonial Office, and wired to Tom Cubitt to get me sent out, with Wells, as a special service officer. I was warned to be ready to sail at a day's notice. Luckily for the Empire, but unluckily for me, the situation in the Hausa States was kept in hand, so I did not go back. The old war flag of the Emir had come into prominence once more. It will be realized that the massacre of three white men and nearly a hundred native soldiers came as a great shock to the prestige of the Empire, at a time when the Dichards of Nigeria, full of their faith, were collecting every malcontent to their banner in the name of Allah and a holy war, to drive the infidel into the sea and kill him before he got there, if possible.

It is said that the Emir of Sokoto, the spiritual head of the Hausa States, sat on the fence for a time to see which way the wind would blow. However that may be, he fell off on the right side and remained loyal to the Crown, his example being followed by the Emirs of Kano, Katsina, Zaria, Bauchi, Bida, Kontagora and Bornu. For a time it was touch and go, but the Emir of Sokoto, placing all his resources at the disposal of the Crown, took over the responsibility for guarding the fort at Sokoto and all public property, and the maintenance of law and order. It speaks

volumes for the prestige and respect in which Sir Frederick Lugard was held that this could be possible, as only three years before, almost to a day, the battle of Sokoto had been fought, when we had established our supremacy.

My old friend, "Pompey" Green, of Tugela and Zaria days, was in command at Kano, and hurried to the scene of the disaster with several companies of M.I., while a punitive expedition set out from Zunguru. Green knew all about the Emir's war flag, but, in order that he should not forget about it, I cabled him from England, "Don't forget flag."

A battle was fought which completely wiped out the stigma of reverse which we had acquired, during which Green and his M.I. came into their own, riding through the rebel ranks again and again with fixed bayonets used as lances. Green captured the flag, and this time saw to it that it did not get spirited away.

Since that day there has been tranquillity in Hausaland. The clash was bound to be. It is always so when great ideals come in conflict. Whatever else the Hausa is, he is a gentleman. Eight years later, at the outbreak of the Great War, the Hausa States, their Emirs, and their whole population, placed their all at the disposal of the King-Emperor. Another great triumph for British Imperial achievement had been won.

Blackwood's M.I. comrades honoured his memory by placing a brass tablet in the Parish Church of Kingston-on-Thames, where the depot of his regiment is situated. The unveiling ceremony was performed by the High Commissioner of Northern Nigeria, Sir Frederick Lugard, at the end of 1906, in the midst of an imposing array of uniforms, as officers of all arms had served in the M.I. Northern Nigerian Regiment. I was honorary secretary to the movement which made this inauguration possible.

When our two Manchester battalions were disbanded subalterns were given the option of staying on in the

regiment, being transferred to other regiments, or going on half pay. I chose the last-named course, not because it was profitable, but because I was ill. I thus escaped a medical board.

There had been a rebellion in Natal and Zululand in 1906, which was not definitely quelled till 1907.

As a very wealthy friend of mine had offered to defray the expenses of raising a company of mounted men locally, provided I was allowed to command it, I placed this offer before the Colonial Office, in the hopes that the Natal Government would entertain the suggestion, but the idea came to nothing. Perhaps the offer was never transmitted to Natal.

As I had been ordered by my doctor to go for a sea trip, in order to try and shake off malaria and insomnia, which was fast driving me into a nursing home, or something of the kind, I sailed for Durban, in order to put the suggestion of raising a small unit before the Natal Government. Shortly after my arrival at Eshowe, in Zululand, where I had gone to see Sir Duncan Mackenzie, the veteran Natal soldier, I received a cable, saying the War Office had written me relative to being on half pay, and that I had better return at once, which I did. On arrival home I was very foolishly persuaded to go out to West Africa for a firm of timber merchants, who wished to acquire a concession. It was a most unsuitable project for me to enter into, as I was medically unfit for such an undertaking. The worst happened, as, of course, I became very ill, as did also my wife, who nearly died, in addition to which the firm repudiated their liability to transport me back, as I had not completed the work. We arrived home at Plymouth in a most deplorable state of ill-health, added to which trouble I was knocked down by a motor-car while crossing the road, and nearly killed. All these things put together decided me to retire in 1908, in order to join the reserve forces as a captain.

This transfer was carried out in the usual way without passing a medical examination, as I was on half pay. In 1909 I found myself involved in a stupid, silly, senseless scrape, which, had I had a sane soul to turn to at the time, need never have been. As it was, General Sir Herbert Plumer (now Field-Marshal Lord Plumer), owing to friendship with my mother, managed to get oil poured on the troubled waters, after which I resigned my commission, and went under severe medical treatment for four months before sailing for Canada, there to work.

The life of a soldier-farmer in Canada is not very interesting to the reader. In my case I had much to learn and a very great obstacle to overcome. The tipling habit of Nigeria, coupled with malaria, did not make matters much easier. I joined the local military forces, and was, in fact, partly responsible for the raising of a squadron of Saskatchewan Light Horse, which was fighting in France five years later. Added to this, I undertook a six months' trapping expedition in the direction of Hudson Bay, which did me a great deal of good, as I was away from saloon bars, patronizing "friends" and civilization. I palled up to an old trapper, called Morgan, and helped him to buy a team of dogs and a sleigh, after which, with six months' hard-tack on board, we started off into the blue, and said good-bye to hot baths and bedclothes. I feel sure this trip did me more good than anything in the way of doctors' prescriptions could ever have done.

During the time I was away my wife was in Winnipeg. I arrived back to her fit and well on the day King Edward died. None of us who are old enough to remember that sad day are likely to forget it, and I certainly never shall. It was astonishing how quickly the Canadians put out a display of Royal mourning—purple—on all buildings and offices. My wife occupied a flat, but we decided, on the night of my return, to dine out at one of the best restaurants, called Mariagi, which was also an hotel, in quietude. On

account of King Edward's death there were no bands or entertainments anywhere, and most people were quiet and subdued.

As we entered the hotel two friends of mine, whom I had not seen for months, calling from the smoking-room bar, signed to me to have an *apéritif* with them there, which I did, after showing my wife to the ladies' cloak-room. When we began to sip our drinks one of my friends, raising his glass, looked towards us and quietly said, "The King is dead. Long live the King!", whereupon a stranger standing close to me said, in a sarcastic voice with an American twang, "What do you think of your new drunken King?", whereupon, aided by my signet ring, I instantly gave him a smack on the nose, which I hope hurt him. Before I knew where I was I had received a terrific punch on the jaw from an enormous man standing close by, which sent me reeling to the wall and knocked me silly. A free fight followed, which resulted in six of us being lodged in the police cells for the night, while my wife thought her man was dead.

Next morning we were all told if we liked to plead guilty to being drunk and disorderly we could pay the usual ten dollars fine and depart in peace, which is a very good and fair way they have of dealing with such matters in Canada, and one which saves time and trouble. Of course we refused to do anything of the kind, not only because we were not drunk, but because we wanted to hear what the magistrate would have to say to the other three, who wished to pay up and clear off, which they could not do so long as we decided to go on with the case.

The case, which came on for hearing in the morning, and which was watched on our behalf by the Veterans' Association, resulted in the charges against us being dismissed, while our antagonists paid ten dollars each and costs, the magistrate remarking that their conduct had been outrageous and provocative.

A great deal of money flows into Winnipeg during the freeze-up winter months, as men who have been working on the prairie arrive with dollars to burn. Often, wisely, they used to make sure of their food and lodging for the winter by buying sufficient meal tickets to last them, and paying for their rooms at the outset, the balance being in some cases quickly spent on drink and billiards.

On 17th March, 1912, which, for the sake of those who may not know, is the day on which the Feast of the Patron Saint of Ireland is kept, I reached civilization from the back of beyond, fit and frivolous. Meeting some men I knew, I was persuaded to attend a St. Patrick's Day dinner, in a suit of dress clothes which I had not worn for a century. The wine was good, the whisky better, while the speeches were of the usual type. We toasted the King, the Royal Family and St. Patrick, while a wag made a festive speech about the pious memory of King William, for which others threw things at him—and then to bed.

Next morning, waking up with the most perfect headache I have ever had to endure, I decided to call for a brandy and soda to put the matter right, which, as a matter of fact, has the exactly opposite effect. Changing my mind, however, I had a cup of tea instead, after which I felt decidedly better. I certainly could not have felt worse, as I was "ill all over." Later I decided not to have a drink till lunch-time, while I thought matters over. "Was it worth while?" I asked myself. "Look at the misery it brought." "Was it not better to feel as fit as I always did when fighting or farming, trekking or trapping, shooting or sweating, 'far from the madding crowd,' where there was no whisky, and where St. Patrick had to be content with Adam's Ale?" The answer was "Yes. A thousand times, yes!"

I promised myself there and then never to drink alcohol again. This promise I have resolutely and strictly kept. It was not done without very great effort, but it was

worth it. A battle ensued within me which lasted for six months, after which I found I had won the greatest victory of my life. When the flag fell in 1914, to bring all the resources of the Empire into motion for its defence, and when fit men were wanted, I was there. It was a great comfort to feel free from the shackles of a stupid, senseless habit, and to be able to look upon life from a totally different angle.

At Winnipeg I became closely acquainted with Colonel Sam Steel, a hard-bitten old Canadian soldier, who had done Yeoman service in the Royal Canadian North-West Mounted Police since the early days. Steel had taken part in the Riel Rebellion of 1885 in the Canadian North-West, and had commanded Strathcona's Horse in the South African War. When I knew him he was commanding the Winnipeg Military District. In 1914 he, of course, came over, and commanded the whole of the Canadians in England, for which he received the honour of knighthood. He died in harness at the end of the war.

I well remember him and the late Sir Ernest Shackleton, of Antarctic fame, at a Veterans' Dinner in Winnipeg, at which the latter gave us a most interesting first-hand and witty account of his experiences. After dinner I sat between these two men, who were the exact opposite of each other in all things save the power of endurance. I well remember "Sam," as he was affectionately called by many who had served with and under him, warning all present that they would be required before long to fight once more. That was in 1912. The late Lord Beresford had the same sort of prophetic insight, when he used to come down to breakfast every morning at a place where I used to stop for shooting in Scotland, and tell us it was one day nearer the German War.

Sending my family home to England in 1912, I spent the summer and autumn of that year with a Government telephone construction expedition, which was running a

light telephone line into and across the wild and isolated spots of Manitoba. The hard life which I led during my service with that enterprise was grand, and the standard of physical fitness which I reached, and the money I saved, far outweighing any petty inconveniences with which I had to put up.

Life, even on the prairie, has its little adventures. When frozen milk is left at your door done up in a parcel, and the day's ration has to be cut or sawn off with an axe or saw, because the carcass is literally frozen stiff; when a man stops you to point out that your nose is frozen, on hearing which you stop and stoop and rub it with snow in order to regain the circulation, there is not much good wishing you were back in a club armchair; you simply carry on.

One sweltering hot day in July I was walking alone to the nearest town, fifteen miles distant, when I stopped in the shade of some scrub to rest. I had a hundred dollars in a wallet in the pocket of my coat, which I took off and threw over a bough. Later, putting on my coat again, I continued my journey and arrived at my destination in due course, only to find that my wallet, full of notes, was not in my pocket. I must have dropped it when I rested, I thought, and, retracing my steps some seven miles, found the wallet, or, at least, a small part of it, all right; the rest, together with the whole roll of notes, had been eaten by gophers (a small and highly destructive ground squirrel)! What would the reader have done under the circumstances? I retraced my steps to camp, instead of to town, to earn another hundred dollars to send home. I was on my way to the post office to buy a money order.

On another occasion I was riding on the open prairie with others, near a river, when we were overtaken by the most violent hurricane I have ever experienced. We saw it coming, and, sitting down in our saddles, rode like —, but it caught us. Just as it was on us, and as it struck

the river, I threw myself off my horse and lay on the ground, face downwards, holding on to some undergrowth. I was hurled twenty yards through the air and struck some barbed wire, which held me. Automatically I had protected my eyes with my left hand, which was badly cut by a barb, the marks of which I carry to-day. Every bit of wind was taken out of me. It was as if I was being suffocated by the raging storm. After about five minutes, which seemed more like five hours, during my struggle for breath, all was calm. Our camp had been demolished; the cook-house, which was on wheels, had overturned and caught fire, two cooks being burnt to death; the roofs were blown off the farmhouses and barns for miles round, while the whole countryside was six inches under water.

To turn from water to fire, not long after this experience had subsided in our minds we received a call to hasten towards the United States frontier, in the Rainy River district, to assist in fighting a forest fire, which had broken out on a huge scale. I shall never forget that experience or sight. Whole villages were being wiped out or abandoned, while women and children, together with the old and infirm, livestock and wild animals, rushed for safety in front of the flames, heat and smoke, which raged on a front of many miles. As is often so in such cases, as looting had broken out, martial law had been proclaimed, and looters were being shot at sight. We cleared a wide belt round the area, so as to ring in the fire. It was not a question of what could we save, but of how much could we save. At the end of a week, weary, grimy, black and unshaven, we had succeeded in limiting the damage to a specific area, and were accordingly withdrawn.

In the fall of 1912 I decided to go home to England, as the Ulster problem was becoming acute. I accordingly booked a passage and returned to Winnipeg, where I had a very disagreeable experience. I was due to leave the Canadian Pacific Railway station in the morning, and, as

I had my ticket on me and enough money for the voyage, I slept the night in a Turkish bath and had a good clean-up at the same time. Stupidly, I did not lock up my money in the usual way, and in the morning found myself without any. I had not much time before leaving in which to catch my train, and had no money for food on the three days' railway journey to Quebec. It is extraordinary how much the human body can stand, as I existed in the train in comparative comfort for three days on sips of water. I am afraid my fellow-passengers found me a disagreeable travelling companion on board the boat, not because of anything I did or said, but for what I did not do or say. As I had no money on me, I did not want to be drawn into sweepstakes or conviviality, so remained aloof, as I knew I would be met at Liverpool, when I could obtain money to tip the stewards. I was quite happy in that respect.

In 1913 I joined the British League for the Defence of Ulster and the Union, and obtained a carbine from them for use in Ulster, if necessary. Although I was a lifelong Unionist and a Conservative by tradition (the Burrards represented Lymington in Parliament for over a hundred and fifty years, as Tory landlords), I was more interested in the defence of Ulster than in the retention or non-retention of the Union, as the former appeared to me to be a question of absolute right if Ulster wished to remain connected with the British Parliament, while Home Rule for the rest of Ireland appeared to me to be a matter of policy and statesmanship.

It was in this mood that I attended a meeting of delegates of the British League for the Defence of Ulster and the Union, of which I was one, at Londonderry House during the season of 1913. The late Lord Londonderry and Captain James Craig addressed this meeting, after we had been entertained to lunch at the Hôtel Cecil, the result of which was that I left for Ulster six months later,

sponsored by Tom Cubitt, who now commands the 2nd Division at Aldershot, and Julian Hasler, who was killed in the war, as a Brigadier.

On arrival at Belfast I found Colonel G. H. H. Couchman, who at one time commanded the Somersets, in command of the Belfast District of the Ulster Volunteer Force. I was posted to the West Belfast Regiment of the U.V.F., and was given the congenial duty of commanding, raising and training a special force of three hundred men, which was to form a special service section. These men were properly attested on attestation papers closely resembling those used in the British Army, and, if called out for service, were to be paid the pay of their jobs in civil life. I was offered a room in an office, where a Colonel Patterson was at work with Captain C. St. 'A. Wake, who acted as his adjutant, but declined to mix myself up with red tape and paper transactions, as I had been told my men were required for active work, and might be called upon to *do* things.

Similarly, I declined to mix myself up with Major Stone and Captain Malone of the Royal Fusiliers, who were working out problems on paper in Colonel Couchman's office. I was my own clerk, sergeant-major, adjutant, quartermaster and commanding officer, all rolled into one. It was a very good thing I was, and that I did not let the grass grow under my feet, as one night in March I was suddenly told by Colonel Couchman that I had better go to a certain address to sleep, where I would be on the telephone. I was to register under the assumed name of Percy. When I asked the reason for all this secrecy I was informed that the spies in Dublin Castle had reported that warrants had been issued for the arrest of Sir Edward Carson and others, of which I was probably one, and that Sir Edward had left the House of Commons suddenly and dramatically that night, so as to be among his followers in their hour of danger, and that he would arrive in Belfast

early next morning. I was further told I would have to meet him at the quay with my special service men and escort him to Craigavon, the residence of Captain James Craig. I was also informed that troops from the South had been ordered to march North, in order to coerce Ulster.

At the time I rather doubted the correctness of the statement relative to the issue of a warrant for the arrest of Sir Edward Carson, and did not think the Government would have the pluck to carry out this very obvious duty (the first duty of a Government being to govern), which, in fact, was almost the case. I have since been told authoritatively by Lady Aberdeen, whose husband was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland at the time, that a warrant was actually issued, but that the Government vetoed its execution, largely on the advice and appeal of the late Mr. John Redmond.

I had a busy night, warning the men to be at the water-side, fully armed, at 6 a.m. next morning. It is to their credit that there were no absentees, despite the fact that some ran the risk of dismissal for not turning up at their work.

Nothing untoward happened when Sir Edward stepped off the mail boat, but undoubtedly if the Royal Irish Constabulary had attempted to arrest him a fearful carnage would have ensued, as my orders were quite clear and definite, and I would, of course, have carried them out. I was responsible for Sir Edward Carson's safety. The car containing Sir Edward and Captain Craig moved off through the streets of Belfast at a snail's pace, followed by my men and a dense crowd of sympathizers. There was no Nationalist counter-demonstration, which would have ended in a free fight. When we reached the outskirts of the city Captain Craig gave orders to the driver to push on and told me to follow.

I shall always remember the scene of activity which

Special Service Section,

(West Belfast Regiment)

U.V.F.

The mere title of this Section denotes that special efforts are required of its Members. It is impossible for those who do not attend Parades, etc., regularly to be efficient for war. This is obviously unfair on those who are, by their united efforts, making themselves efficient; and will be a real source of danger in the unfortunate event of service in the field.

At a future date, therefore, any man who has not shown by his attendance, that he intends to do his best to fit himself for active service will be struck of the strength (i.e., not finally approved), and revert to his original company; banding in his clubbing and equipment.

Many men desire to join S.S.S.

Parades in future will be at FORTH RIVER FOOTBALL GROUND, on MONDAYS, TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS, at EIGHT, p.m., and as notified.

F. P. GROZIER, Captain,
COMMANDING S.S.S. W.B.R., U.V.F.

225 SHANELL ROAD, BELFAST
15/4/14

ULSTER VOLUNTEER FORCE SPECIAL SERVICE SECTION, ORDERS ISSUED BY THE AUTHOR IN 1914.

The Parish Church of Bessalee.



Dedication of Window and Memorial Tablets

To the Glory of God and in
Living Memory of

Major-General Charles Joseph O'Neill
Officer Commanding
And the Officers and Men of the
17th Battalion The Welch Regt.

Who made the Supreme Sacrifice
in the Great War - 1914-1919.

Major-General T. Price, M.A., D.S.O.,
Commander (General) T.F. and Master of Ballinacorney

and unveiled by

Major-General F. P. Grozier, C.B., D.S.O.
Late C.O.C. 11th Bn. (Welsh Border) Brigade.

On **Saturday, February 14th, 1921,**
at 2.30 p.m.

THE MEMORIAL SERVICE AND UNVEILING CEREMONY WHICH LED TO THE AUTHOR'S RESIGNATION FROM THE R.I.C. IF HE HAD NOT GONE TO WALES THE CADETS WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN RETURNED.

greeted our arrival at Craigavon that morning. Ulster Volunteers, who had been guarding Craigavon all night, were being given food. Their uniforms, arms and civilian clothes were all different, and they were all jabbering at the top of their voices at the same time. Eventually they departed and left me and my men in control.

A system of entry into the grounds of Craigavon by pass was instituted, admission being barred to all others by my guards at both gates. The men slept in the lofts and stables, their messing being very well arranged by a firm of contractors, who erected tents in an adjacent field. Captain Craig's children had been sent over to Mount Stewart, the seat of Lord Londonderry, with their nurses, in order to make room for Lieutenant-Colonel T. V. P. McCammon, the Commanding Officer of the 5th Royal Irish Rifles, and in charge of Administration of the Ulster Volunteer Force, Captain W. Spender, now head of the Civil Service of Northern Ireland, and myself, who slept in the nursery together.

The house-party consisted of Captain and Mrs. James Craig, Sir Edward Carson, the late Lord Londonderry, Lord Castlereagh, Mr. James Campbell, Lieutenant-General Sir George Richardson, G.O.C.U.V.F., Colonel Hackett Pain, his Chief of Staff, Colonel T. V. P. McCammon, Captain Spender and myself, besides which many Ulster leaders and prominent men were constantly coming and going.

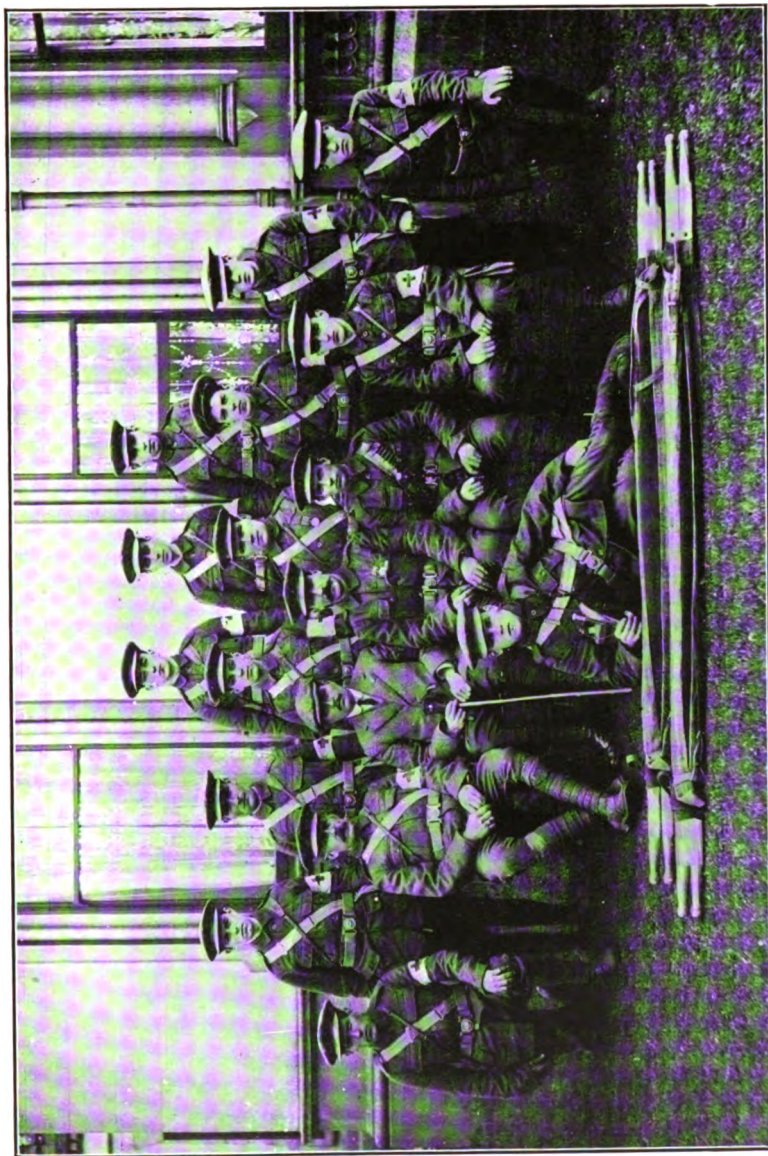
Shortly after I was ensconced in Craigavon the Dorsetshire Regiment from Victoria Barracks, Belfast, marched out to Hollywood Barracks, in conformity with Field Service Regulations, which lay down that it is bad soldiering for troops to be quartered in the midst of an unfriendly population in war-time, or a population the attitude of which is an unknown or problematical factor. A peculiar thing happened on this occasion. As the battalion passed the gates of Craigavon my guard, acting under orders

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received from Captain Craig through me, turned out and presented arms, whereupon the Colonel of the British battalion saluted and gave the command, "Eyes right by companies." At that very moment a funeral passed between my guard and the battalion, with the result that nobody knew whether the salute of the soldiers was meant for the U.V.F. "rebel" guard or for the funeral. Our propaganda, of course, said the salute was meant for us, and I believe such to have been the case, because, granted that the funeral passed the guard at the exact moment when the Colonel passed the guard, such would not be the case when the rear company passed the guard. The point may seem to be a small one now, but it was extremely important at the time, as indicative of the attitude of the Army towards us.

Major-General Macready arrived on the scene at this time, as a sort of Military Representative of the Government with the powers of Resident Magistrate. I had him watched from the start, and knew all his movements daily. He came to call on Sir Edward Carson at Craigavon and describes his visit to the Ulster leader in his book "The Annals of an Active Life," in language which I consider uncalled for. After all, Sir Edward was at the time a leader of a great people and a man playing a man's part, who returned General Macready's call at Hollywood in a manner due to his (the General's) position. I caused the General to be conducted past the guard in accordance with my orders, but little did I realize, when doing so, how closely I would be associated with his deplorable régime of six or seven years later in Southern Ireland.

During my duty stay at Craigavon I first came in contact with Captain C. C. Craig, now a Privy Councillor and recently leader of the Ulster group in the Imperial Parliament. There are some men who are born soldiers, C. C. Craig being one of them. His U.V.F. unit was always well run. I umpired for him on one occasion at



THE ULSTER REBELS 1914.

a field day, which was carried out with Aldershot precision. He was, therefore, a great asset to the Royal Irish Rifles and the Ulster Division, when it was formed for service in the Great War, as he became a company commander of the men he had commanded in the so-called rebel days of the stormy period of 1914, just prior to the war.

The last time I ever saw C. C. Craig was in June, 1916, just prior to the big Ulster attack from Thiépvál Wood on the opening day of the Somme battle, in a long communication trench called Elgin Avenue when I was commanding a battalion of the Royal Irish Rifles. On 1st July, during the attack, Captain Craig was badly hit and taken prisoner in the subsequent German counter-attack. I am quite sure, if he had not had the misfortune to have been captured, he would at least have commanded a brigade by the end of the war, if the recommending officers had been fair and competent (which, alas! was sometimes not the case). He certainly would have if I had had anything to do with him. His war effort was no mean one, as he came into the full flood of active military life, without previous experience, under very strenuous conditions, at a time of life—he was, I think, forty-four years of age—when some men were claiming to be too old at forty for an active job.

I need not here refer to the “Curragh episode,” which had so much to do with our fortunes in the North, save to say I would do to-morrow what General Gough did then, should I be confronted with a similar situation in any part of the Empire, as the soldiers were asked to do a thing they should never have been asked to do, namely, coerce Ulster. Ulster had, and has, no favoured position in the Empire, and desires none, but it has rights, which have since been respected. That they have been since respected by the British people is, I think, proof in itself that what it was proposed to make the soldiers do in 1914 was wrong. We were kept in complete touch with the

Curragh by motor-cyclists, who carried news emanating from reliable sources, gathered and collated at the Sands Soldiers' Home.

A military conference of all the commanders of the U.V.F., which I attended, was held at this period in the billiard-room at Craigavon, when the assembly was addressed by Sir Edward Carson, who pointed out the gravity of the situation and the possibility of greater military effort and sacrifice being required from Ulster in the near future. As the Ulster leader had asked for the expression of opinion, Major R. McCalmont, M.P., of the Irish Guards, who represented an Ulster constituency in the House of Commons, got a chance to rub in certain hard, indisputable military facts, which carried weight and conviction, owing to the uncompromising and logical manner in which they were presented. In effect he said the men of Ulster were being asked to give everything for the defence of their land and were being "let down," because, although the leaders were telling the world they were armed and would fight to the bitter end, as they undoubtedly would, still they were not supplying the rank and file with the necessary arms and ammunitions with which to fight.

This indictment, which I construed at the time as a direct accusation of breach of faith on the part of those responsible for the direction of affairs in the U.V.F., burst as would a bombshell in the midst of a mothers' meeting. The direct outcome of this speech was the gun-running of a few weeks later, about which more anon. Within a few days Captain Spender was at work on the matter.

Before our period of temporary mobilization came to a close my special service section was inspected on the lawn in front of Craigavon by Sir Edward Carson, who addressed the men, and thanked them for their loyal support and unselfish service, following which a smoking concert was held in the mess marquee, which was attended by Sir

Edward and the house-party. The period of suspense having been successfully overcome, we formed up next morning before marching off and gave three cheers for Captain and Mrs. Craig, at the same time thanking them for their kind hospitality. This little impromptu ceremony made a more lasting impression on my mind than any of the other ceremonies, not only on account of its simplicity but because of the kindly words Captain Craig spoke to the men, and the words of encouragement and genuine appreciation he addressed to me in front of them.

It can be imagined that all the time we were at Craigavon Ulster was like a powder-magazine laid bare to the chance flicker of a naked lamp. Feeling was running high. Any chance public-house brawl between Catholics and Orangemen was liable to blow the whole structure of society sky high. On one of these occasions one of my men absented himself and was found drunk, as soldiers will be often found, in a very undesirable and dangerous quarter, in U.V.F. uniform. After consulting Captain Craig relative to the matter, I hastened down to the city late at night and removed the culprit to safety. Next morning he was dismissed. I had only one hold over the men—i.e., dismissal. As there was always a good deal of drink flying about, I used to turn a man out for the first offence of this nature, by calling round at his home and removing his uniform. I was helped very considerably by the women on these occasions. Drink being the curse of many of their homes, they welcomed the drastic measures I was forced to take to render my command sober, which sometimes had a beneficial effect on their own homes, as many a man tried to sober up in order to get back to me. The wives and children used to ridicule the dismissed men most unmercifully, shouting after them in the streets such comments as, "Did the wee marn" (Ulster for "man") "tear the breeks off ye?"

Writing about breeches reminds me that while we were

at Craigavon Lord Castlereagh, or Lord Londonderry, as he now is, became involved in a difficulty one night with my guard at the gate. I had a system of admission by counter-sign after Last Post had been sounded, which involved the usual notification of the pass-word to persons likely to require it, in the prescribed manner. Lord Castlereagh had been attending the drills of his regiment of U.V.F. in North Belfast, and, returning late, was not in possession of the magic word which would open the gate, as did "Sesame" on another famous occasion. Unfortunately he could not make himself known to the sergeant of the guard. In addition to this little trouble, a loaded revolver found in his possession led the sergeant to imagine that at least the assassination of Sir Edward Carson, then sleeping peacefully in his bed, was intended. Lord Castlereagh was "fully and well searched"; whether they pulled the breeches off him or not I do not know. I was appealed to on the telephone, and was able to relieve the desperate situation, but, as "orders is orders," the episode ended with credit to all concerned.

Gradually the special service section of the West Belfast Regiment became the policing authority for many of the functions in which Sir Edward Carson took part, for the presentation of colours and such-like, as, in addition to the danger of Nationalist interruption, the Suffragette menace was always before us.

It became necessary to define my duties more clearly in case of armed hostilities, or conflicts with the forces of the Crown or the Nationalists. To deal with the latter was easy; with the former a definitely-laid-down arrangement was necessary. I was, of course, acting under the orders of Colonel Couchman at all times, so succeeded in obtaining definite instructions as to my exact attitude in the event of a proclamation being issued by Sir Edward Carson calling into being a Provisional Government for the control of Ulster on behalf of, and in trust for, the King. I was to

seize all the Royal Irish Constabulary barracks in a certain area and prevent the military from leaving Victoria Barracks at all costs. This necessitated reconnaissance and organization. Some of the police barracks would be handed over; others would have to be surrounded and occupied, as the situation at the time determined. I reconnoitred Victoria Barracks when the troops were at church, and measured the width of the gates and approaches, with a view to the placing in position of portable barbed-wire entanglements. In addition I selected machine-gun positions from which to cover the exits, as we were well off for the latest type of machine-gun, which I occasionally tested.

I did not look forward to the prospect of shooting British soldiers and Irish policemen, I can assure my readers, the only hope being that they would elect to be neutral, as things began to look very black in the political world.

There were many newspaper representatives in Belfast, who were always on the look-out for news. It was very difficult to be always on guard, but I quickly perceived that one man stood out head and shoulders over the rest, who could be trusted not prematurely to report, if asked not to, and not to exaggerate, distort or deliberately misrepresent. Percival Phillips was his name. He represented the *Daily Express*, and is now a special correspondent of the *Daily Mail*. As senior British war correspondent in France during the war he was awarded the K.B.E. On one occasion I accidentally "let out" that there was to be a march of the U.V.F., with fixed bayonets, through the streets of Belfast on the following Saturday, as a direct reply to the Government's threats. I asked Phillips not to report what he had heard. He respected my wishes. Alas! another correspondent, less scrupulous, overheard my conversation with Phillips and reported it, the result being that his newspaper achieved a passing success. As one good turn

deserves another, when the gun-running night arrived I tipped Phillips the wink and sent the other fellow off fifty miles in the wrong direction, the result being that the *Daily Express*—and Phillips—achieved an exclusive score.

All arrangements had been made for the gun-running, when the whole of the U.V.F. were ordered to mobilize all over Ulster at the same time at short notice, the authorities and the Government being completely fogged. Fred Crawford, an old Militia officer, had gone to fetch the rifles and ammunition from the Continent, and had accompanied the ship during an eventful voyage, both before and after the landings. Crawford was a bit of a fanatic, which was all to the good. He is alleged to have signed the Ulster Covenant in his own blood, and, as he was a lifelong total abstainer, he was reliable—he had need to be!

I had worked in very close contact with the late Lieutenant-Colonel T. V. P. McCammon at Craigavon, and it was, therefore, a great source of pleasure to me when he specially selected me to accompany him to Bangor, County Down, to assist him in the unloading of the rifles at that place. The plan of campaign was, that while a decoy ship, full of coal, was to enter Belfast Docks, permission to open the hatches of which would not be given to the police by Colonel Couchman, a rumour having been previously circulated that the ship contained arms, the real thing was to arrive at Larne and be mostly cleared there, the balance being sent on in the same ship to be unloaded at Bangor. Colonel McCammon told me a car would call for me at the Ulster Club at 10 p.m., and at 7 p.m. Colonel Couchman confided the whole plan to my keeping. At 7.30 p.m. I dined with some R.I.C. officers and others, who had instructions to keep the guardians of the law merry and bright, and far from the telephone, till past midnight. Arriving at Bangor, I found all approaches to the town picketed, the telephone wires temporarily out of action, the Coast Guard office in the hands of the gun-runners, reserves

of the U.V.F. ready at hand, motor-cars waiting, ready to drive off with their loads to known destinations, and Colonel McCammon all expectant.

Unfortunately, the good ship *Fanny*, which had been re-christened *Mountjoy*, by Major Crawford, in memory of a memorable event in the history of the Siege of Londonderry in 1689, was late in arriving at Bangor. In the meanwhile, as had been expected, Mr. Smith, the R.I.C. Commissioner of Belfast, had arrived at the docks with some of his men, and had demanded that the hatches of the collier should be opened in order that a search might be made. Colonel Couchman, supported by hundreds of men of the U.V.F., refused, in a tactful manner, to allow the hatches to be opened, and kept up an argument till the time had arrived for the opening of the ship, when it was found to contain—coal!

It was very amusing to hear the remarks of the old landladies and servant girls of this pleasant little summer seaside resort of Bangor, as they pulled up the blinds and blinked their sleepy eyes, on seeing hundreds of fully armed men and countless motor-cars, whose arrival had been unheralded and unheard. From one dear old soul, who had an idea that she was going to be shot at dawn, that hour having long since departed, I got a welcome cup of tea, in return for consolation and well-chosen words of encouragement.

The ship and its cargo arrived just as we were getting anxious, as secrecy, cut wires, picketed roads, and all the rest of it, during the hours of sleep and darkness, were one thing; the same secrecy and dislocation during the hours of daylight and work were another. At Hollywood that night British soldiers slept, Réveillé had now sounded. The actual process of unloading, skilfully arranged as it was, did not take long, and by 8 a.m. Bangor had regained its accustomed respectability. I had breakfast at the Ulster Club at 9 a.m., and at 4 p.m. was on parade again for the

presentation of colours to the West Belfast Regiment by Sir Edward Carson.

One day was very much like another in those good old times. By June my special service section was, in the opinion of Percival Phillips, the backbone of the movement. I had striven to make it independent of myself, as I might have become a casualty, and there is no doubt if any "dirty work" (in the best sense of the term) had to be done, on us it would have fallen. As I had to go to Larne one day on particular duty, and also had an engagement to march to Craigavon with my men, where Captain and Mrs. Craig were kindly going to provide tea for the whole party, I left the whole conduct of that march, which was carried out in uniform, with arms, headed by the West Belfast Band, also in uniform, to my second in command, who had been a sergeant in the Royal Irish Rifles. When I called at Craigavon on the following Sunday to thank Captain and Mrs. Craig for their kind hospitality to my men, the former told me that, to all intents and purposes, they might have belonged to the Regular Army, so correct was their conduct, while my former Chief, Sir Frederick Lugard, who was staying at Craigavon with Lady Lugard, in order to study the situation, was full of wonder at their turn-out and general deportment.

Some comment was created at this time in Parliamentary circles because of a signed, printed, warning order which I issued to my men, in which I stated they might soon be required for "active service." This resulted in a question being asked in the House of Commons by the Nationalists. Some Unionists in Belfast were scared because of my action, but in those days, as now, I understood that I was preparing for almost certain war with someone, it was difficult to say whom. In war there is no room for half measures.

We held a camp of exercise for my men at Whitsuntide, 1914, in the neighbourhood of Belfast, which was well

attended. The chief object during that period was to knock the stout out of those who possessed a superabundance of that beverage in their systems. Many used to break out of camp at night and get drunk in the Shankill Road, from which Orange hot-spot they came, but I luckily had a complete and practical understanding with the R.I.C., who used to lock them up and acquaint me of the fact, when I would send an escort for them after they had had time to cool down in a disagreeable cell. In camp we had our own code of penalties for such offences, which, although not orthodox, answered the purpose.

By July, 1914, I had an armoury under my care, containing over a thousand stands of arms, which was guarded nightly by a small guard of U.V.F. men. The safe custody of these arms caused me grave anxiety at the time, as I considered the guard inadequate to cope with any attempt, either by the Nationalists or the R.I.C., to seize them. True, my men lived in the district, and would have turned out to a man, when wanted in an emergency, but a quick raid on the arms would have involved their loss before assistance could have been called. There was only one thing to do, in my opinion, as the U.V.F. authorities were quite incapable of visualizing the danger, or, at least, took no notice of my representations. I decided to sleep in the armoury, on a camp-bed, nightly. Till after the outbreak of the German War, when an all-round truce was proclaimed in Ulster, I slept nightly, with a loaded revolver by my side and a button within reach, ready to press to raise a general alarm, and explode land mines and signals.

The 12th July celebrations in Belfast in 1914, when most good Orangemen "walked" by day, in memory of King William and the Battle of the Boyne, and got drunk in his honour by night, or long before it, passed off without incident, although we had considerable anxieties. The flames of passion against the Nationalists were liable to be fanned into a terrific blaze owing to the introduction of the

alcoholic factor, while we definitely took into our account raids by Nationalists on to our armouries while our men were amusing themselves elsewhere. For my part I organized a double guard, composed of reliable men, who placed the safety of arms and ammunition before the revival of memories of the distant past.

Almost the last military act I performed for the U.V.F. was not only a risky, but an exciting one. For some days prior to the declaration of war against the Germans a very large quantity of small arm ammunition was smuggled into Belfast daily, through the Customs, in butter casks. It was my duty to be at the end of a telephone daily, at a very early hour in the morning, while fifty of my picked men were secreted near the docks, in readiness. A Customs official, whom I never saw, or even knew by name, as the details had been arranged up above, in the seats of the mighty, used to telephone me one word, signifying "All clear," after the daily consignment had passed through the Customs. Had the "butter" been held up, he was to telephone me another word, on receipt of which I would have joined my men and seized the consignment. As, in this event, the R.I.C. would have been called in, the first spark of civil war would have been ignited. Nobody knew this better than did I, which did not make the strain more easy to bear.

During the week-end after the declaration of war I spent all day and night preparing a triple return of men of the West Belfast U.V.F. who were willing to volunteer for active service anywhere, or for home defence, or who were unwilling to serve at all. A desire to come forward for service in defence of the Empire had not, by that time, taken concrete form, owing to the menace from the south of Ireland. It had not yet been realized that the safety of Belfast and Dublin both lay on the battlefields of France and Flanders.

Shortly after the outbreak of war I was recalled to the Army as a captain in the Royal Irish Fusiliers, and was

ordered to report for duty in Dublin. My services were, however, urgently required in Ulster, as the transfer of the men of Carson's army to the service of the Crown had not yet become complete. There was a transition stage, during which politicians were making bargains, which irritated many U.V.F. men very much, the consequence being that many, more particularly in Tyrone, joined up on their own and were lost to the Ulster Division. Colonel Tom Hickman, M.P., arrived in Belfast at this moment, on duty regarding the formation of the Ulster Division, and, instead of my going to Dublin to the Royal Irish Fusiliers, I was dispatched to London, to pick out suitable ex-N.C.O.'s on the Horse Guards Parade, who were volunteering in large numbers in answer to Lord Kitchener's appeal. As a matter of fact, I had joined up as a private on the first day of the war, at the instance of the late Captain Truman, of the 2nd Manchesters, with whom I had fought in the same battalion in South Africa, as I could not wait for a commission, but my discharge was speedily granted, owing to the run of events in Ulster and the recommendation of the High Commissioner for Canada, under whose control I came, as an ex-Canadian soldier resident in the British Isles.

The last U.V.F. ceremonial parade I ever attended was quite unique in its way. The Norfolk Regiment, before leaving for France, decided to leave their colours in the safe keeping of the authorities of Belfast Cathedral. An imposing handing-over ceremony was arranged, at which my so-called rebel regiment of West Belfast Volunteers, then in process of transformation to a state of complete respectability, provided a guard of honour. I have in my possession a recruiting poster, which is a medley of rebel-volunteer and volunteer-rebel propaganda. It bears the crest of the Royal Irish Rifles, and is headed "West Belfast Regiment," while the recruiting office mentioned, at which men could be attested, was none other than the headquarters of the "rebel" movement!

We must now leave the Ulster Volunteer Force, as such, and follow some of its triumphant progress, as a properly constituted Division of the British Army, through the greatest crisis the Empire, or the world, has ever known. It was good to breathe the loyal air of Ulster in 1914 prior to the war, but it was much better to draw strength from that same loyalty, clarified as it was and made greater by the non-existence of political chicanery, on the Imperial battlefields of France and Flanders. Ulster was, and always will be, great, but the Glory of England and her world-wide Imperial tie are greater.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SHANKILL BOYS

I WAS appointed major, second in command, of the 9th battalion Royal Irish Rifles, of the Ulster Division, in September, 1914. This battalion was really the West Belfast Regiment of Carson's army under another name. Of it my old special service section was the backbone. Conditions were very different. When in politics it is necessary to do as politicians do, but when you are in the Army there can be no intrigue. It took my Colonel, of whom more anon, and me three months to knock the politics and beer out of the Ulstermen, and a further six months to make soldiers of them. It was a hard task, but in the end they became not only soldiers, but first-class fighting men, of whom their city may well be proud.

I know that many war books have been written, and that the general opinion is that all war books are the same. I have no intention of writing war chapters in the strict sense of the word. I believe every man who saw the war, put up with the war, and hated or enjoyed the war, according to his ideas, tastes and circumstances. I know my war was different to everybody else's war because I am different to everybody else. On the whole I loved my war. Why not? I had been brought up to it from my earliest days; I had heard men talk of nothing else; I had prepared for it and it suited my temperament. But I detest war for my country's sake. In one way I was much luckier than many other officers of experience during the war. I was

not tied to precedent. If there is one thing which requires delicate handling in war, it is precedent. It is good; it is even essential to study precedent in war, and, having done so, just as essential to find out new ways of doing things, or of applying inviolable principles, if they exist. It is, alas! easier in war, or in peace, for that matter, for an individual placed as I was, unfettered, to take up a definite line and stick to it, in the full knowledge that, if I did things in the interests of the State and of winning the war, of which my superiors perhaps disapproved, because my actions reflected on them, or caused them or their friends inconvenience or loss, they could not hurt me. In the words of General Sir William Peyton, I "set my standard very high." It mattered not to me if I was promoted or if I was blacklisted as *difficile*. No pension of the future could be jeopardized. If they wanted to send me home as "inconvenient," they could. They never did—because I *was* free. It was in this spirit that I approached the task of forming a new battalion and raising it to the height of old Regular Army efficiency, which it ultimately attained.

At the outset I was very lucky in having a good Commanding Officer. Lieutenant-Colonel Ormerod, late of the Munsters, was, literally, wonderful. Over sixty years of age when he returned to the colours, to lead a battalion out to France, his greatest asset was a knowledge of his limitations. He and I, as Commanding Officer and second in command, became interchangeable. He was a sahib in the best and truest sense of the word, and we had unlimited trust in each other. Twenty-five years older than I was, he brought all the best of the old Regular Army into the officers' mess, the sergeants' mess, the parade ground and playing-fields, and, ultimately, the battlefield. The result of this was that he took out to France in 1915 a battalion which was in every respect A1.

We were in the 107th Infantry Brigade, which was commanded by Colonel G. H. H. Couchman, the U.V.F.

commander of the Belfast District, as the men and battalions were drawn from that city. The brigade should have been as good as any brigade in France, for the men were all splendid. Napoleon said there are no bad soldiers, only bad colonels. He was right. Unfortunately, two of the battalions never prospered, on account of the inferiority of their commanding officers. The other battalion, commanded by as fine a soldier as was ever killed on a battlefield, Colonel Bernard, of the Indian Army, a cousin of the late Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, was as good as ours. Consequently, the 9th and 10th battalions of the Royal Irish Rifles carried the full weight of the brigade on their shoulders, and sometimes caught the reaction caused by the defects of the other two.

There was a good lesson to be learnt in respect of the shortcomings of our brigade, caused by inequality of efficiency, and one which I was careful to note and profit from. The lesson was an old one, apparently forgotten, namely, "Four good colonels, *well backed up*, make a good brigade." In the course of my narration I shall be able to show how the inequality of brigades and divisions hampered victory during the war, and the reasons why such was the case.

Colonel Ormerod and I speedily came to the conclusion that if the battalion was to become really good, we should obtain other blood from the officer class in England in order to set up a better standard among our officers. To say this is not to cast a reflection on the Belfast officers—far from it—but it is correct to say, just as a prophet has no honour in his own country, so also middle-class men, drawn from the same town as the rank and file, to be made into officers *en masse*, do not carry, or pull, as much weight as efficient, or even mediocre, strangers. Their accents are too similar, unless they have been at school elsewhere, and their private histories are too well known among the officers themselves and the rank and file.

I do not think the General Staff had, prior to the war, really visualized the subject of very great expansion. The raising of an army cannot be visualized, unless the visualizer has had actual experience of quick raising and training. Lord Kitchener had had that experience in Egypt, so had no difficulty whatever in visualizing a huge army. On the other hand, Sir Henry Wilson, a much more "polished" soldier than ever Lord Kitchener was, had not had that experience, so doubted the capacity of the new divisions to quickly absorb military knowledge and *morale* in sufficient quantities to face highly trained troops. The French made the same error; they doubted our new armies. Lord Kitchener was acting on what he knew from his own experience to be true. Sir Henry Wilson was deducing from what he had read. Lord Kitchener was right. As no adequate preparation had been made, it followed that men were "pitchforked" into jobs connected with raising and training, without regard to what they knew, or their capacity for applying knowledge, if it existed.

I have in front of me, as I write, a photograph of the officers of my battalion, taken just prior to our departure for France. All the regimental officers in that group, with the exception of the Colonel, Adjutant and myself, were specially selected men, who were considered capable of leading in war, the headquarters staff being "pitchforked." The battalion was lucky, because the "pitchforked" men happened to know their work. There were, in the group about which I write, twenty-seven regimental officers who were all selected for war, apart from headquarters, out of which nine proved to be definitely useless and failed to stand the acid test, but of the remaining eighteen some were very good and some were, like the curate's egg, only good in parts. Out of the nine "imported" officers in this group three proved themselves to be more than useless. It will be seen, so far as my own battalion was concerned, both



PRESENTATION OF SHAMROCK TO THE 9TH ROYAL IRISH RIFLES BY MRS. COUCHMAN ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY, 1915.



BRIGADIER-GENERAL AND MRS. COUCHMAN AND THE AUTHOR ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY, 1915.

in local officers and "imported" officers, the average of "duds" was one in three. When it is remembered that this battalion was got together with great care, and was much more highly trained than was the average service battalion, it is fair to assume that the proportion of inefficient to efficient, judged from a war standard, was greater in many other service battalions.

The subject of "dud" officers does not, I think, touch the Regular Army so much at the first blast of war, because most become casualties. Those who are less useful than the majority go into the casualty list just the same, "funkitis" not being among the failings of the British peace-time officer once he is in action. But directly the first reinforcements arrive, after a big battle, the problem of the Regulars is the same, in a lesser degree, which gradually becomes more and more apparent, till the stage is reached when the denomination is common to all sorts of battalions, Regular, Territorial and New Army alike.

The 107th Belfast Brigade was under the distinct disadvantage of receiving its early training in close proximity to the locality from which it was recruited, which added to our troubles as a battalion greatly. It was not till we got over to England, far away from local distractions and family ties, that we were able to put the final touches on to a machine composed of good material. We did not suffer from what our men did, but from what the men saw other men in other battalions being allowed to do with impunity.

As a "punishment" for "bad behaviour" our brigade was transferred to the 4th Division for the whole of the winter of 1915-16, during which time we were in the line, while the rest of the Ulster Division and one brigade from the 4th Division were in billets, in reserve, far behind. The idea of transfer was a funny one and, I think, unsound, as the introduction of a couple of colonels would

have done the trick. For our part we got on extremely well in the 4th Division, thanks to the kindness and consideration shown to us by Major-General Hon. Sir William Lambton and his staff. General Lambton was a Guardsman with the "Guards touch." I believe I am right in saying from the beginning to the end 4th Divisional Headquarters were streets ahead of any other formation in France, save the Guards, and, accordingly, got more than most out of their men. The effect on the 107th Brigade was to make it the best brigade in the Ulster Division for the Thiépval fight. When the time came for the 107th to return to the Ulster Division the majority of the men asked if they might remain in the 4th Division!

Our first and second *faux pas* as a battalion, in France, were caused by alcohol. In the first case, while crossing the Channel with all lights out, a thinly built sportsman climbed through an open porthole of the liquor bar attached to the smoking-room, which was locked, and passed out every full bottle he could lay his hands on, the whole being distributed throughout the battalion in the dark. The theft was not discovered by the smoking-room steward till after we had left the ship. Nobody got drunk, but I had to sign a cheque on the regimental account, and place the battalion under stoppages for the amount, as, of course, nobody knew anything about the matter. The next slip involved some of our warrant and non-commissioned officers, who thought they could drink bad brandy, illegally acquired from the French, in the same way as they were accustomed to drink stout, i.e., copiously. These senior men were absent when the battalion paraded to march up to the trenches, and were, of course, tried by court martial and reduced to the ranks, in addition to which they suffered imprisonment with hard labour. The French, quite rightly, had forbidden the sale of spirits during war-time, and in this particular instance the people who sold the brandy were very heavily punished by the

French military authorities, to whose notice the case was brought.

The history of alcohol, used as a beverage during the war, and my knowledge of it from close personal contact and experience, leads me to the conclusion that if ever this country again becomes embroiled in a fight for its existence—which God forbid!—the manufacture, sale and consumption of all spirits should be controlled by law. I am now a teetotaller of many years standing, but, as I have drunk as much as most men and more than many, I have no personal prejudice against the truly moderate consumption of alcohol, if taken in the proper way, at the proper time. Alcohol does not suit me, so I have given it up, but it may suit others, and that is their look-out, but it is recognized that in peace-time its sale must always be under Government control on account of its dangers. In war things are different. I did not, during the last war, ever avail myself of the rum ration, as I found I could do without it, and was better off in times of stress and strain, when it could not be obtained, than most people who were accustomed to it. I, however, looked upon the properly supervised ration with favour, if distributed, when really required, as a medicine to help the wet, weary, cold and resolute soldier on.

As a general practice in war, I would eliminate all alcoholic beverages from the national life "for the duration," with one reservation. I would, as matters stand now, permit the manufacture and sale of light beer to the civil population at the rate of one pint per day per adult working male and female. At home all ranks of His Majesty's forces would, of course, comply with the regulations applicable to the population. In the area of operations I would absolutely forbid the consumption of alcohol in any shape or form to members of the armed forces of the Crown, save when authorized as a free ration. I would permit the issue of a free ration of

one pint of beer per day to all ranks (in a similar manner as the French issue wine to their soldiers), within a given area of the firing-line. In the firing-line, supports and reserves (including Divisional Reserve and Divisional Headquarters), and in all places in which the enemy was in contact, I would forbid the consumption of all alcohol.

My reasons? I saw much too much trouble, waste, inefficiency, misery and individual demoralization caused by alcohol in France and at home during the war to ever make me think otherwise than that alcohol, as such, was a greater danger to victory than the Germans. I am not unsupported when I make this statement, as Mr. Lloyd George said so during the war, and was at one time seriously considering prohibition, as a war-time measure, on account of the loss of output of munitions due to drink. On that occasion the liquor trade won by bluff and bounce, at the expense of the safety of the country and at the risk of defeat.

In France, when a brigade commander, I protested strongly against spirits being laxly sold to officers, and particularly young officers, in clubs, and I even suggested that spirits should not be consumed by any officer in France, from the Commander-in-Chief downwards. Unfortunately, the spirit trade was too strongly entrenched in certain quarters. Perhaps, too, those with whom a decision rested for the enactment of such an embargo on spirits liked their little drop. As His Majesty and Lord Kitchener became teetotal during the war as an example to others, no more need be said.

In restricting the manufacture of beer in war-time, I would not let the brewers get away with vast profits, as they do in peace-time, at the expense of the consumers. I would give them a percentage on their capital, which should be reasonable but not generous, as theirs is a non-productive trade. I would so regulate the cost of beer for rational home consumption, that the cost of the free ration



THE AUTHOR LEADING THE 9TH ROYAL IRISH RIFLES PAST THE G.O.C. 1915.



MARCH OF THE ULSTER DIVISION THROUGH BELFAST, 1915.

to the Crown forces in the area of operations fell on the trade, and not on the public, and, after paying all charges, including interest on capital, I would credit the profits, which should be handsome, to the Exchequer, as I would make the consumer pay through the nose for his or her daily pint. "What a dreadful man!" I can almost hear some of my readers exclaim. I don't know which is the most dreadful, war or drink, as they are both so destructive in their different ways. There are attributes about war which drink does not possess. War does still sometimes bring out such qualities as chivalry, bravery, endurance and fortitude, the very opposite of which are to be found in drink.

Many colonels, various majors, captains and subalterns, in my own small knowledge, rendered themselves useless for war at various times in France, owing to their taking too much strong drink, or doing themselves too well. Added to this, much time was lost to me and countless officers connected with courts martial for the trial of many offences arising, either directly or indirectly, out of drink. When the total time lost owing to the various causes which arose in my brigade on account of drink is multiplied by the vast number of other brigades and formations in the entire armies of the Empire, operating all over the world, it is incomprehensible to me how the General Staff tolerated the menace and handicap. The only reasons I can possibly think of for this toleration are the two I have already given. The consequent loss of efficiency did not, of course, stop with the trial of the offenders—far from it. Men were diverted from other duties to look after them; others had to perform their duties, while their own power of work was denied to the nation.

I shall probably be asked how it is, holding the views I do on the subject of loss of efficiency in war, through the medium of strong drink, I can advocate moderation in drinking in peace-time. To that reasonable question I

merely reply that through education the truth is now dawning on the population that we would be better off without the brewer and distiller, and that when the truth has sunk in to the majority of the population, then, but not till then, those useless purveyors of untold misery will be brushed aside for ever. To say that they contribute vast revenues to the State is only to state a half-truth, which needs explanation. The hundred and fifty million pounds or so which the consumers contribute to the State at the moment in taxation is a flea-bite to the revenue which would accrue from better trade, better conditions, better work, less misery and more happiness, if the breweries and distilleries were closed down.

I am aware that alcohol as a medicine may always be required, and as such it can be used, like other drugs, under regulations.

I wish the scientists would set to work to discover an efficient substitute for the rum ration, the chief requirements of which are mobility and portability, ease of issue and durability against breakage, climate and rough handling. If this is done a great boon will be granted to the soldier, not only on account of the greater supervision which the rum ration requires, owing to its danger as a narcotic, but because, more particularly in the case of youngsters, the consumption of the rum ration is not infrequently the first step to the drink habit.

There is another totally different reason why the highly organized liquor trade has become a menace to the country and the people. The leaders of this trade have seized the reins of power, and are to be found strongly entrenched in cabinets, political associations, both Houses of Parliament, and local government. The tune they call in these places is the tune of "trade" requirements, as opposed to the welfare of the nation, when these two interests clash. In the interests of society they should have their wings clipped. It is to be hoped that the United Christian

Churches, who in the past have derived considerable support from "trade" money, will resolutely set their faces against the practice of taking money for their slums and useful work from the very source which does much to create slums and manufacture misery.

I must switch off from the water wagon to the water-logged trenches. My Commanding Officer, Colonel Ormerod, gallant soul as he was, almost lost his life in the mud-ridden, water-logged trenches in the winter of 1915, owing to having contracted pneumonia in the firing-line, which resulted in his being invalided home, never to return to France, although he commanded a reserve battalion and a prisoners of war camp till the Armistice. Assuming command of the battalion on 1st January, 1916, I held the same till I was promoted to command a brigade nine months later.

I found the duties of a commanding officer involved a great deal of risk from our own side. Luckily, in my Brigadier, Brigadier-General Withycombe, of the K.O.Y.L.I., and my Divisional Commander, Major-General Oliver Nugent, I possessed the support of two of the best soldiers in France. On one occasion, when I had put an officer back for trial for desertion or cowardice (of which he was found guilty), the Adjutant-General's Department at G.H.Q. obviously tried to break me, having quashed the conviction on the officer, for reasons best known to themselves. It is a long story, not worth narrating in detail. Sufficient to say, had my Divisional Commander been a weakling, I should have "gone," while my Brigadier played the game. A few years ago the officer who was the cause of all the trouble lurched up against me at a dance club, while rather drunk, and became most offensive. I knew the commissionaire at the door, who was standing not far off, to be an ex-Guardsman, so I went up to him and quietly asked him what he would do to a soldier who ran away from the line, to which he replied, "Knock his

head off, sir!" Pointing out my ex-officer-bibber, who was still insulting other people, I asked him to go and do it. He did.

Close on the heels of this extraordinary case of letting an officer off, one of my men was sentenced to death for desertion. He had left the line at almost the identical spot as had the officer. We shot him one morning at dawn, in a little French village. He had, designedly, been made as drunk as a lord late at night, and was carried in secret to the place of execution in an unconscious state, where he was tied to a stake. As sometimes happens on these occasions, owing to cold or nervousness, the unfortunate man was not killed outright, and had to be finished off by an officer armed with a revolver, an eventuality which I had foreseen and made provision for.

I would recommend to the Army Council the advisability of amending the Army Act in such a way as to make execution by machine-gun fire obligatory on similar occasions where possible. It is not fair on the men, in this enlightened though brutal age, to be expected to undertake such a task, when better and more efficient machinery is close at hand. There is nothing new in the suggestion. We used the mechanical method in Kano in 1903.

There is a certain amount of agitation for the repeal of the death sentence in war, which I do not think is justified. A British court martial is the fairest court in the world. Moreover, the safeguards are numerous. No soldier likes shooting a comrade. No supreme commander likes confirming a death sentence. No subordinate commander likes recommending that a death sentence be carried out. All are anxious to, and actually do, look at the best side of the story. Any extenuating circumstance, the non-prevalence of the offence, or even a slight conflict of evidence, are instantly seized upon as a way out—if such is possible—but sometimes that is, alas, not so, as long as the line must be held, the enemy beaten, and England remain free.

The death sentence in war is undoubtedly a great deterrent to desertion and cowardice.

From my own experience of war, I feel that the question of the death sentence in war should be tackled from the point of view of efficiency and *morale*. If real efficiency is ever present in the minds of officers; if the *morale* is high; if commanding officers and all staff officers knew their work, then there would be little or no need for the death penalty. "The fewer the 'dud' officers, the fewer the executions" is a sound maxim.

There is another side to the question, too. I do not remember a single general being shot during the war for cowardice or running away, while I do remember one who was promoted, instead of being tried by court martial, for behaving badly.

In the next war, if there is one, let us shoot our "châteaux" generals and "shell-hole" sergeants, if we have to do, for breaking the rules of British barbarism, but let us try them both on the same footing for the same things, not forgetting, if it is bad for a private soldier to run away from the enemy, it is a thousand times worse for his brigadier to do so.

The Army Council would also be well advised now, in peace-time, to think out a plan whereby, in the next war, if there is one, the same kind of mistakes as were made in the last war are avoided. I refer to the systematic promotion of unsuitable officers to battalion, brigade, Divisional and Army Corps commands, and to the appointment of "dud" officers to the staff, and their subsequent advancement. It cannot be denied that such things were done, the proof being in the fact that some divisions were very good and some very bad. This unevenness was due to the promotion of "duds," for all private soldiers in their raw state have the same average value. Generals who insisted on getting the right men promoted were regarded as "terrible people" by some. Such names

as Gough, Shute, De Lisle, Strickland, Cubitt, Heneker and Nugent at once suggest themselves as being "terrible people" to the "dud mind," but what men they were! Ask their staffs; ask their colonels and men if they were "terrible"! With them every man knew exactly where he was, and that the objectives would be taken with as little loss as possible. Not so with others, who, when they failed, might well round on someone and say, "The wire was uncut," or offer some such excuse.

More divisions failed to get their objectives because the Divisional commanders had not the will, or the ability, to make the men get there than for any other reason.

Tom Cubitt transformed the Welch Division from a mediocre crowd to a first-class fighting formation within two months. Why? The men were the same.

"Uncut wire" was a fatal excuse for brigade commanders to make for not getting as far as they should have done during attacks, as they were almost invariably told they should have seen it was cut. I used to go out at night to see if it was cut, and if there was any nonsense from above, as to my having to certify that it was, I used to suggest that the Divisional Commander, G.S.O.I and C.R.A. should come with me to have a look, after which all argument invariably ceased.

If officers had been promoted in accordance with their military value and nothing else, our armies, during the last war, would have been at least fifty per cent. better. The solution of the defect is that the General Staff should tackle the problem now, in the way in which other difficulties are tackled. After all, it is merely a question of loyalty to the King's commission, as definitely expressed in the serious charge and responsibility contained therein.

I had the good luck to have not long taken over my battalion, when we were attacked by the Germans. As the men did very well, the battalion secured a "mention" in Sir Douglas Haig's first dispatch.

As I had almost always been employed, since the early South African days, in training men and then leading them in battle, I looked forward with great interest to the first big occasion on which the men of my battalion should have their chance. This chance arrived on 1st July, 1916, on the opening day of the Somme battle.

As I sat under a tree in Aveluy Wood with Colonel Bernard, who was commanding the 10th Rifles, waiting to move up, we agreed that, though the orders for the attack looked very pretty on paper, they might not work out in practice, as our task depended on the previous fall of Thiépval village. We accordingly agreed to alter our orders, if, on marching through the wood, we found the village to be still in the hands of the enemy. It was painfully apparent, from the rows of British dead of the 32nd Division in no man's land, the bodies hanging on the German wire, and the fire which was being directed from the village, that it was still in enemy hands.

We carried out the charge, as agreed, which cost Bernard his life, but which enabled some of the Ulster Division to reach the final objective. I have no doubt in my mind that, had we abided by the original orders, few of our brigade would have got farther than no man's land, and the final stages of the attack would have failed. To say this is not to cast any reflection on Generals Nugent or Withycombe, who were tied down to ground and lacked elbow room. Moreover, it is always easy to be wise after the event. Sufficient to say, had any subaltern in a promotion examination disposed his troops as the Ulster Division was disposed, he would have been ploughed. On the right flank was a fortress, Thiépval, and immediately in front of it was the junction of two British Divisions, 32nd and 36th. On the left were two fortresses, Beaumont Hamel and Y Ravine, and immediately in front of them was also the junction of two British Divisions, 36th and 29th, while the area of the 36th Division was cut in two by an impassable river, the

Ancre. There was no other alternative for this distribution save a different plan throughout.

When I marched up through Thiépval Wood into action that July morn, at the head of the pick of Belfast, to the accompaniment of the deafening din of battle, I felt, with Scott,

“ Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife,
To all the sensual world proclaim,
One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name! ”

Literally, my blood boiled and I saw red. *The day*—yea, even *the hour*—had arrived and I thanked my God for permitting me to share in its glories.

We were engaged for the first three days of July in the battle of the Somme, and reaped the advantage of having a first-class brigade staff to work for. I do not suppose any more complete understanding has ever existed between a Brigadier and his Brigade-Major than was the case between General Withycombe and Maurice Day, who now commands a battalion of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry. They were both in the same regiment; they had served together for years, and the latter had been adjutant to the former during the war. General Withycombe should have got a Division at the end of 1916, but he never got one at all, while Day was sent to America to train Americans, which was good for America but not for us, as, had he remained in France, he must surely have commanded a Division.

The result of the battle of the Somme, so far as I was personally concerned, was that I was immediately recommended for command of a brigade, which I owe entirely to the fact that Generals Withycombe and Nugent were fair-minded men, as my seniority was against me. I was the junior colonel in the brigade and had returned to the colours at the outbreak of the war as a captain. A cousin



Photo by Lieut. H. A. J. Lamb, R.E., A.R.I.B.A., Brigade Signalling Officer 119th Infantry Brigade
**THE ANCRE VALLEY NEAR HAMEL WHERE THE ULSTER DIVISION FOUGHT ON
 1ST JULY, 1916.**

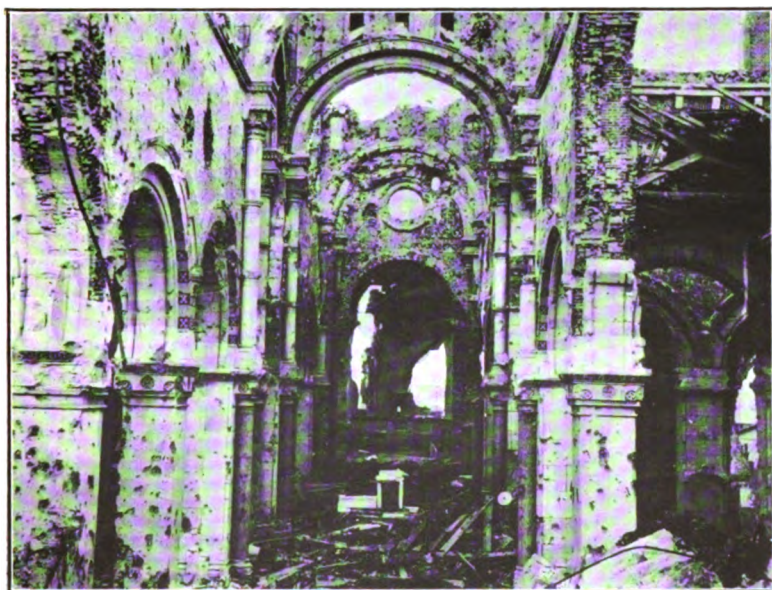


Photo by Lieut. H. A. J. Lamb, R.E., A.R.I.B.A., Brigade Signalling Officer 119th Infantry Brigade
THE RUINED CHURCH AT ALBERT NEAR THIEPVAL.

of mine, Colonel Brinsley FitzGerald, who had been private secretary to Sir John French at G.H.Q., had told me, when I met him with Sir John at Amiens in 1915, that no distinction was going to be made between officers provided they were efficient, and that only the best would be promoted. This good intention evidently also found favour with Sir Douglas Haig, but, unfortunately, the promotion problem must depend on the outlook of all commanders. Colonel FitzGerald had been very good to me on several occasions in my life, and my battalion owed much to a very comprehensive memorandum sent me early in 1915, regarding the training required for France, when I was training the battalion for war in Ireland.

In the battle of the Somme we had been in the Xth Corps, commanded by my old Nigerian Chief, the late General Sir T. L. N. Morland, who stopped me in his car as we were marching back to rest, and congratulated us on the result of the fight. I had under a hundred men with me, the rest having been killed or wounded.

When we went into the line up north, opposite Messines, my battalion quickly established a reputation for raiding. We never had a failure, seldom fired a shot, and never left a comrade behind in the enemy lines, while our co-operation with the gunners was superb.

During the time we were in the Salient we saw a great deal of the Irish Division, and received into our ranks many Roman Catholic officers and men, which was all to the good, as the Army knows no distinctions. I became very friendly with the late Major Willie Redmond, the late Mr. John Redmond's brother, as we used to meet and fraternize at a café in Bailleul. Major Redmond was extraordinarily broad in his outlook in regard to the Irish problem and the war.

At this time a medical officer was posted to us for duty, Bedford Russell by name, a New Zealander, who kept us alive, not only by his professional ministrations but by his

fund of humour. He is now a leading Harley Street specialist, well versed in the mysteries of the ear, nose and throat. If he looks after his patients as well as he looked after us, he assuredly has a bright future in front of him.

We had another New Zealander, Price, a gunner, constantly attached to us, who was also an excellent soldier and companion. Price came to see me two years later, when I was temporarily commanding the 40th Division. He was going back to his far-off country and came to say good-bye, hearing I was in the offing. "Well," were his last words to me, "I wouldn't have missed this show for all the tea in China. Never did I dream there were such good fellows in the Old Country!"

Comparison is odious, but if I was not born what I am, I think I would rather be a New Zealander than anyone else. They are so like us. Another New Zealander, by adoption, whom I used, by fate, to meet almost every time I went on leave, was the late Major-General McIvill, brother of the international polo player, of the 12th Lancers. They were both with me at Wellington. The polo artist was the elder and smaller of the two, and apparently not so book-clever, but both appear to have acquitted themselves all right in this difficult world. Sons of the V.C. of the 24th Regiment, they surely go to show that those who belittle heredity have not reckoned with the fighting factor.

One sometimes asks oneself what has been the most pleasurable moment of one's life. To me, I think, that moment (so far as my work was concerned) was on being called away from tea, which we were having in an old, tumble-down farmhouse, St. Quentin Cabaret, to the telephone—a most unusual thing to happen to me—to be told by Teddy Duffin, our Staff Captain, who was earnestly profuse in his congratulations, that I had been promoted Brigadier-General.

The news was not unexpected, because Sir William Peyton, the Military Secretary, had told my mother "I had

been very well reported upon." My officers were genuinely glad and genuinely sorry, and it was with a heart full of both pride and regret that I went up to the line immediately to say good-bye to everyone, and to thank them one and all individually for my promotion, for I was not, and am not, so silly as to think that a regimental soldier gains his own promotion, because his men gain it for him.

That is why I owe a debt of gratitude to the 9th battalion Royal Irish Rifles which I can never hope to repay. What men they were, too! Dear old Woffling Monty, Daisy Sinclair, old Jim Newton; Horace Haslett, who lost an eye and came to other grievous bodily harm, and yet could not be kept in England while there was a war on; "P. J.," Paddy Kane, the Fiji magistrate, and his pal Harding, the R.C. from the South; red-headed Mac, the son of a Presbyterian minister (you wouldn't have thought it!); Crawford, his friend, who won the M.C. twice; Holland, of raiding fame (here a laugh is raised by old hands); Gould and Berry, who was reported dead but turned up in Germany; Tom Foy, the magician, Hine, the Cockney, and countless others, too numerous to mention. And what of the dead—the ones who gave their all? Dear old George Gaffikin, so typically schoolmasterly, and *so* untidy in Piccadilly, with his "Good luck, sir!" in no man's land, near Thiépvál, while going on his long last venture, and big Campbell, too, who never came back. Paddy Jackson, the worthy son of a worthy sire, hit the first time and killed the second, who went on patrol without orders "to keep his nerve in," and dined at an Old Etonian dinner at Amiens at 8 p.m., and was on his usual trench duty six hours later. And what of those great men, the rank and file? Glover, Culley, Miller, Starrett, McKinstry, Richardson, Borthwell, Martin and Kelly, Perryman, Verner, and all those other hundreds of stout fellows? As I write they pass in front of me, and I salute them, saying, from the bottom of my heart, "Thank you!"

General Nugent had sent word to the brigade office, where I spent the night, to say he wished to see me before I left the Division next morning on my long drive from the Salient to the Somme. When I reached Divisional Headquarters, Mudie, now a big man in the Tank Corps world, old Harry Singleton, of the H.L.I., and the immaculate Robin Henry, the A.D.C., were there to say "Au revoir," while the Commander gave me sound advice; he always did. "Treat your four battalions like four big companies," he said, and "Do not forget your oddments," advice which I always acted upon to the best of my ability.

And then he asked me who should command my battalion in my place, to which I gave him the instant and unhesitating reply "Horace Haslett" (a very sound Belfast business man, and a son of a former Lord Mayor of Belfast), and went on to explain, as follows: I pointed out that my second in command, Woods, was at the Senior Officers' School at Aldershot. I had sent him there to qualify for a battalion. He had quite a good military mind, but there were difficulties of which I was aware. He could never command any battalion in the Belfast Brigade, or, I really believe, in the Ulster Division, because the fellows have their peculiarities, prejudices, petty jealousies and favourites. I always meant him to command a battalion in another Division, where he would be free from petty jealousies, and also be unable to indulge in reprisals. I was now getting a brigade, and was willing to fill my first vacancy for a commanding officer by asking for Woods. Haslett was at home, and had recovered from his wound. He had now only one eye, but he was never a one-eyed man, and never could be. Till he came out, I suggested that my then acting second in command, Montgomery, should command the battalion and eventually become Haslett's second in command, as they were friends.

This advice was not acted upon, after which the inevitable happened, when Woods became Commanding

Officer of my battalion. Intrigue, jealousies, the removal of the eyes from victory to the "main chance," all told their tale, which eventually led to the disruption of the unit and the unwarranted removal of Colonel Woods from command.

Many S.O.S.'s were sent to me from the Ulster Division, and I eventually met General Nugent and discussed the matter after Colonel Woods had gone home. I was genuinely sorry for Colonel Woods, as I knew what did happen would happen, so took the first opportunity of going to the War Office about him, which resulted in his sailing for North Russia with the original "Hush, Hush" expedition. There he did very well, becoming a local full colonel, for which services he was eventually awarded a C.M.G.

I mention these facts in detail because Colonel Woods was till recently an Independent-Unionist member of the House of Commons of the Parliament of Northern Ireland. During one of his election campaigns I was forced to intervene by telegram and letter in order to keep the good name of my old battalion of the Royal Irish Rifles free from mud-slinging, one of his opponents having, with great audacity and impertinence, implied that he (Colonel Woods) had sheltered in a dug-out, when he should have been elsewhere, during the first battle of the Somme. As I had recommended the Colonel for a D.S.O., which he subsequently, but not immediately, obtained, I was the best person to judge the happenings of those three strenuous days. Of course, only bad soldiers and fools neglect to take cover when the best interests of the State are thereby served, but to make an imputation that the second in command showed cowardice in the presence of the enemy, and then received a D.S.O., struck me as being the height of political knavery, which reflected on the battalion.

I always thought General Nugent was one of the worst treated men in the war, and should have been a Corps

commander, had the Gods been kind. There were Corps commanders and Corps commanders. On one occasion a dear old gentleman came up to my front "to see the German wire." He evidently had a bad A.D.C., as, in coming to me, he had selected probably the only bit of front in his area which was on the reverse slope of the hill to the enemy, no wire being, therefore, visible! I did not like to disappoint the old warrior, so, telling him to keep down on account of sniping (which caused the A.D.C. to almost crawl), advised him to look into a periscope, through which I showed him our own wire, which made him quite happy, save for the fact that he said the enemy wire was much too strong, and that he would give orders for it to be destroyed by artillery fire! To save accidents, I let the gunners into the joke, which went all round the Corps.

General Nugent was a stickler for dress. One day he met one of my subalterns in the line wearing a Hawkes steel helmet with cover and badge, which we had adopted for general use. "Is your helmet regulation?" he asked. "No, sir," replied young Pomeroy, looking straight at the Divisional Commander's steel hat, which was of the French cavalry pattern! No more was said.

I said good-bye to the Ulstermen with great regret. I had been among them, as a so-called rebel and as a soldier of the King, for close on three years, during which time I had received nothing but kindness from all classes, and when I occasionally met them again, in battle or billets, my contact with them always acted as a tonic.

They had come through their great test on the Somme admirably. Mistakes there had been, of course, but they were not of their making, and they had responded to every call. Had others planned the battle of the Somme they might have done it differently. They would not have been left out at the final objective, with no Divisional reserve to back them up (the whole of the Division had to be used in the actual attack). I would have attacked between the

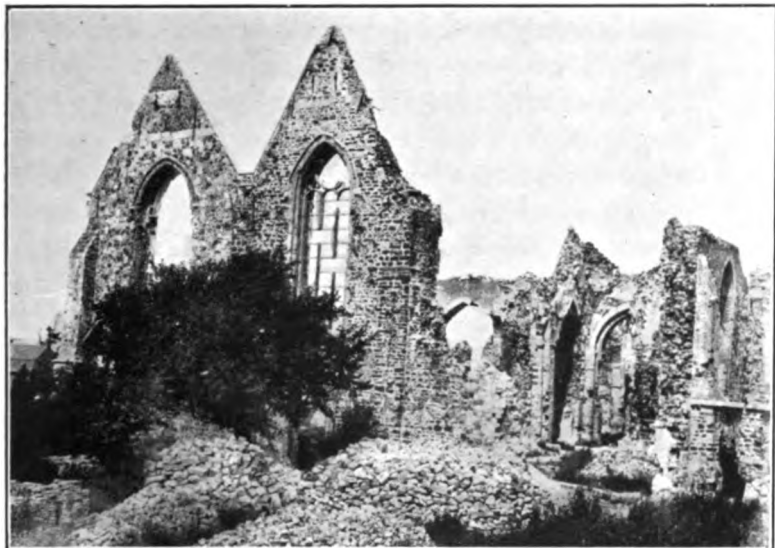


Photo by Lieut. H. A. J. Lamb, R.E., A.R.I.B.A., Brigade Signalling Officer 119th Infantry Brigade.
NEUVE ÉGLISE IN RUINS.



Photo by Lieut. H. A. J. Lamb, R.E., A.R.I.B.A., Brigade Signalling Officer 119th Infantry Brigade.
ARMENTIÈRES, THE 119TH INFANTRY BRIGADE "O.P." AUGUST 1918.

fortified villages at night, and rolled up to the right and the left of me at dawn next day, and even taken the fortified villages in reverse, but that was a problem for G.H.Q.

Sufficient to say 1st July, 1916, was clearly Ulster's day, and I am glad I had the honour and good luck to have taken part in it.

CHAPTER IX

WAR REFLECTIONS

I HAD been ordered to take over command of the 119th Infantry Brigade of the 40th Division, which was commanded by the late Major-General Harold Ruggles-Brise, a Grenadier who excelled in the science of musketry. I am not competed to draw a fine distinction between the science or the art of war, or to say to which category it belongs, but it seems to me, after over four years' experience of the greatest of all wars, that it may quite well be a bit of both. Anyhow, General Ruggles-Brise had reduced musketry to a science while Commandant of the School of Musketry at Hythe, while a few others, during the war, had reduced the leadership of men and the application of scientific methods of training to a fine art. Cannot the matter be left there, as in war it is the results that count?

Soon after I had reported my arrival at Divisional Headquarters I was frankly astonished. The General being out, I was asked to stay to tea by the G.S.O.1, who told me as much as he could about my new brigade. The gist of his remarks was to the effect that I would be very disappointed in my brigade, which was *very bad*—quite the worst in the Division—the men were bantams from the coal mines of Wales and could not even carry packs, while the *morale* was low. The Colonel sympathized with me, while I turned his sympathy into laughter by saying there were no such things as bad soldiers, only bad colonels! *But why was it that this brigade was so bad? It had been in existence for about two years.*

The taking over of a brigade for the first time by a young Colonel in war-time, with only one idea in view—the defeat of the enemy in the field by the superiority of everything that matters, at the decisive point and moment can never be understood by those who have not done it. Our methods were quite new. The old-time colonels promoted to brigades, even during the war, did much the same as was done in the days of bows and arrows, when there was no such thing as “electricity.” We new hands at the game—I was the newest of all, as I was the first officer serving on a reserve basis to obtain command of a brigade—used the power of “electricity” (in a metaphorical sense). “Electricity” had carried me from major to brigadier in nine months; it would carry this so-called bad brigade to the very height of efficiency in half that time. We “electrified” our men into activity, and “executed” our colonels and senior officers when necessary.

Major-General Ruggles-Brise was a sincere and good friend to me till the day of his sudden death in 1927. In France he gave me a free hand, and in return we gave him a brigade which carried him to victory after victory, six months after the General Staff officer had confessed to me that in the 40th Division was probably the worst brigade in the British armies in France! I shall always remember General Ruggles-Brise's first meeting with me in that dingy little French farmhouse on October 20th, 1916, owing to his hearty laugh. Nobody who once heard that laugh could either forget it or cease to love it, as it was so downright honest. Nobody who served under “the man” could ever think badly about him, as he was such a white man. With me it was rather different. We had to give him a fine brigade in a short time. To do that, we had to transform a neglected machine into a highly modern piece of mechanism full of humanity, during a period of the worst weather conditions in the firing-line that could ever be imagined. This transformation necessitated the

removal from office of a brigade-major, a brigade signalling officer, nearly a dozen commanding officers in turn, a few seconds in command, three adjutants, several doctors, quartermasters and transport officers, and one or two sergeant-majors, almost every one of whom eventually thought badly of me!

The battalions under my command were the 19th Royal Welch Fusiliers, the 12th South Wales Borderers and the 17th and 18th Welch Regiment. The S.W.B.'s were the best by far when I took over, and, because they had been properly grounded, when young, by Colonel Pope and his adjutant, Second-Lieutenant (now Colonel) Brown, D.S.O., M.C., and Sergeant-Major Vasher, always remained slightly the best, there being little to choose between them and the 19th R.W.F. at the finish, the Welch coming very close behind. Colonel Pope became a casualty in 1917 and returned to England to command his own battalion, 3rd Welch, special reserve. He was a good soldier who came of a remarkable family of soldier brothers, the sons of the well-known Dorsetshire brewer. Unfortunately Pope died of his injuries in 1919.

The S.W.B.'s was the only battalion which kept its headquarters personnel intact throughout my process of pruning and elimination.

The Divisional Artillery was one of the best in France, due to the fact that it was originally taught by Major-General Read, V.C., who won his V.C. at Colenso. It never lost its form. The co-operation between our brigade and the artillery had, by the middle of 1917, been reduced to a fine art, it being no exaggeration to say (it would be unfair to the men not to say it) these two formations carried the weight of the Division on their broad shoulders right up to March, 1918, after the great German offensive.

A few remarks relative to the winter of 1916-17 may not be out of place. The mud and general conditions were truly appalling. Our part of the line at Rancourt

had been taken over from the French at the end of the battle of the Somme. Dead bodies of French soldiers lay about on all sides and could not be buried. Trenches there were none. The firing-line, existing in shell-holes, remained four days in the line, carried up rations for two days and could never be reached by day, while no man's land became an impassable obstacle of mud.

Under these circumstances, since no attack could possibly be made on us, I suggested we should withdraw a few hundred yards to high ground, and hold the line with machine-gun posts, which would cover the valleys and re-entrants by fire and put the hulk of our men into caves and dug-outs in close up support and reserve, thus avoiding casualties from that condition known as "trench feet," trench fever and exposure. General Ruggles-Brise approved of my idea, but the fashion was to give up "not one inch of ground," which showed an entire misconception of the use and value of ground. There is a great difference between "giving up" voluntarily and being kicked out.

General Sir John Du Cane was our Corps Commander, who had previously been actively engaged with Mr. Lloyd George in the Ministry of Munitions. Sir John was very indulgent to me on many occasions, but I think his staff over-valued wire. They insisted on wire being put out in the mud when it was as much as we could do to get the men and their rations up, let alone heavy wire; moreover, as I have already said, there was no need for it, as the sticky swamp was a defence in itself. We were told to fill up "progress reports," showing the amount of wire put out per week.

I remember a conference being held by the Corps Commander in my dug-out, when some very caustic things were said about my wire, and I was definitely asked how much I had really out in front, to which I replied, "One single strand along my whole front!"

This remark created astonishment. "What was the good of one single strand?" I was asked. "To keep me and others from swimming over to the German lines at night by mistake!" I replied. Consternation and hard words followed, the wiring report of the Division on my right being produced. "Look what *they* have done!" I was sarcastically told. Needless to say I didn't believe a word of this report, but could not say so. It was a fatal thing to tell stories about wire during the war, as the time inevitably arrived when someone else would take over the line and find out the true state of affairs. On this occasion we side-stepped to the right, when I took over this "well-wired area" which had been held up to us as a pattern to work to. Of course I found what I expected to find, namely, little or no wire out at all. In the meanwhile the Germans retired to the Hindenburg line, closely followed by my men, which caused me to send the following wire to my Division "for information of Corps."

"Enemy withdrew during night. Evacuation thorough. They must have even pulled up their own and our wire for transportation to Berlin."

I was told not to be facetious!

Over a year later, when we fought on the River Lys, under the same Corps, we found our reserve battle area, in which we had to fight, over-wired. Having to fight our way back to the river, we were held up by the very obstacles which had been placed about the country in great profusion to stop the Germans, which rather goes to show that even in war you can have too much of a good thing!

I have mentioned the condition called "trench feet," which played so much havoc and caused so many casualties during the winter of 1914. In the winter of 1915, when I was with a battalion, I came to the conclusion that casualties from this cause could be quite well prevented, provided the rules laid down by the medical authorities were strictly

carried out. The question thus became one mainly of discipline. Of course isolated cases of unpreventable "trench feet" were bound to occasionally arise, owing to men being run down in health and at the same time really unable to carry out the orders for some good reason or other, but such cases were very rare indeed. During the winter of 1915 I do not suppose we had more than half a dozen cases of "trench feet," after we had tumbled to the secret which consisted of dry socks once a day, massage of the feet, hot tea or soup, and the regular application of the powder issued by the medical authorities. I drummed this into my new brigade incessantly, and was only once let down by a Colonel, who allowed his battalion to contract somewhere about a hundred casualties from this cause in one tour of four days' duration in the line, owing to pure neglect, after which he joined the train bound for the base. We used to make the men work in pairs, A being responsible for B's feet and vice versa, which had the great advantage of leaving B with us for suitable action should A go sick.

This so-called very bad brigade of mine first came to notice as a fighting formation when the Germans were about to retire to the Hindenburg line. To the astonishment of Divisional and Corps Headquarters, the despised little Welshmen actually had the audacity to force their way into the thinned German lines, bombing them and bringing back valuable information, for which they received the thanks of the Corps Commander! From March, 1917, they went from triumph to triumph. In April they played football hard, the S.W.B.'s winning a small silver cup, while they mended roads better than anybody else. In the same month they took "XV Ravine," Welch Ridge, Borderer Ridge, Fusilier Ridge, while in May they made a successful sortie to La Vacquerie. The team was beginning to work together. Their trenches were better dug than anybody else's. Why not? Were they not miners? They could carry their packs farther than most of the rest. Why not?

Were they not as strong as cobs in their prime? All this talk about being "bad" was pure tosh.

The "electric" treatment was beginning to work; even Divisional Headquarters were constantly receiving shocks. One morning the routine situation report to Division casually announced that the 17th Welch had captured a German machine-gun and crew. On another morning a prisoner had been brought in, a valuable identification being thereby secured, and so it went on, while all men marvelled!

One day in April, 1917, a Lieutenant-Colonel was sent to command a Welch battalion. He was a delightful fellow, a regular soldier of some twenty years' service, who had passed the Staff College and had been employed as an instructor at a military educational establishment for many years. He had been a G.S.O.2 and G.S.O.1 in France, had friends at court and longed for advancement to command of a brigade. In peace-time I could imagine no more delightful companion. As a stepping-stone to his desired goal, he was ordered to be placed in command of a battalion, while I was ordered to report on him at the expiration of a month, as to his fitness for command of a brigade. It so happened that a few days after he arrived I saw all my Colonels together, and warned them confidentially that the attack on XV Ravine and Welch Ridge (which had not then received its name) was to take place shortly. To my utter astonishment, my new Commanding Officer asked me afterwards if he could have ten days' special leave at once to take his small boy to school for the first time! As his battalion possessed an extremely good fire-eating second in command, I told him to put in for his leave at once, as in my mind I pictured him in more congenial surroundings with schoolmasters than with sharp-shooters. Welch Ridge was taken by the absentee Colonel's battalion in fine style, for which I recommended the second in command, Major R. J. Andrews, M.C., for a D.S.O., which he did not receive, owing to somebody going to Divisional Head-

quarters and saying he had not consolidated his position properly, which was not only interfering but quite untrue.

On 5th May, after the return of the absent Colonel, we were ordered to make a sortie by night on to La Vacquerie in order to blow up dug-outs, inflict damage and take prisoners, while on our left another brigade operated in the same way. In the Corps operation order a vicious paragraph was included; vicious because it was impossible. Impossible orders should not be issued in war. We were ordered to leave no dead of our own behind! How could we help doing so? It was dark and we did not know the locality. As a recompense for not getting a D.S.O. for Welch Ridge, I deputed Major Andrews to superintend the forward withdrawal, armed with our red brigade lamp by which he was to be located, and told him to comply with the order to the best of his ability. Less than half a dozen dead were left on the ground, while on our left the majority of a whole company, losing its way, walked into the wire of the Hindenburg line, never to return. Andrews got his D.S.O.

Early one morning shortly after this my Brigade-Major came to me and said he had heard a rumour that things were not all right on the Welch front, as some Germans had entered our line at night and had not been thrown out by the battalion. Now we had an unwritten law in the brigade that if small bodies of Germans were unlucky enough to get into our lines, they were to be dealt with instantly by the battalion concerned, without reference to brigade and in co-operation with the artillery, and that on no account was the S.O.S. to be sent up, as we had special private signals to the gunners in order that a general hullabaloo should not ensue along the whole Corps front for a trivial incident.

I said I would go up and look round myself, and as on my way I passed the battalion headquarters, I looked in to have a talk with anybody I might find

on duty. They told me the Colonel was asleep, and as they mentioned nothing about a raid, I wandered on thinking all was well, till I was stopped by a sentry, who advised me not to go down a certain trench as the Germans were there. I asked if Major Andrews was about, and received the reply that he was, so sent for him. Andrews was obviously behaving with loyalty to his Commanding Officer, but the enemy was apparently still in our line, and had been there for six hours. Putting two and two together, I placed Andrews in command of the battalion then and there, and told him to get on with the job, adding that I would be breakfasting in two hours' time, and that I expected to see a message on my plate from him before I started my porridge, saying he had cleaned up the mess. I then returned to the battalion headquarters, and waking up the Colonel, took him to one side and asked him all about things. As it was perfectly obvious that he knew little about the situation, I told him then and there that he had better send his kit down to the transport lines and get off on another ten days' leave, during which period I would try and get him sent back to the staff, for which he was better suited. Major-General Bonham-Carter will probably remember this case, as he was Brigadier-General, General Staff, XVth Corps at the time. I shared a tent with Bonham-Carter and Lister, of the West Kents, for some days during the South African War, when we were subalterns in the M.I. I got rid of the Colonel as nicely as I could.

Now what were the deductions to be made from this astonishing case? Firstly, it would be impossible, in most cases, for a true report to be rendered on an officer's capabilities after one month in command of a battalion on a quiet front. Most of us had gone through the acid test of big battle. Secondly, "they" assumed that, just because "they" had said so, a report would be rendered which would enable "them" to comply with Sir Douglas

Haig's very sound rule that an infantry brigadier should have had practical experience of command of a battalion in action, and thus promote a friend on the staff. Thirdly, it is unfair to place a brigadier in such a position as I was placed in by having, not only to refuse to report well on the specially favoured individual, but actually to report adversely on him. Of course I had no hesitation in doing what I did, as the safety of the line and the welfare of the men were the only consideration.

I quite saw that very occasionally there might be cases when a staff officer or a gunner, or even an engineer might, with advantage, be placed in command of a battalion for a short time in order to gain touch with technique with a view to being given a brigade; but in a case such as I mention the ultimate goal in sight would be a Division or Army Corps for the selected man, who would be a well-known leader with a positive *métier* for leading.

Tom Cubitt was a case of this kind. He had the misfortune to be commanding the troops in Somaliland at the outbreak of the war (where, however, he made hay while the sun shone), so was not allowed to come home. He accordingly lost nearly two and a half valuable years on the Western Front and, I believe, when I saw him at lunch at Jules, when I was home on leave, at the beginning of 1916, he had not yet been to France. What was the result? I was given a brigade before Tom Cubitt because I had been "in it," which was absurd, as, when he was a colonel in 1904 he had given me my M.I. Company in Northern Nigeria, and he was a leader. As it was, Tom was sent to command a brigade of artillery in France, which generally, in those days, meant adherence to a specialized branch without scope. I believe I am right in saying that had not General Gough, in the most sporting manner possible, brought this particular case to the notice of the Commander-in-Chief, Tom Cubitt would have found him-

self in a cul-de-sac. So Tom went to a battalion. Needless to say, he soon got a brigade and a Division, but, if he had been in France during the first two years of the war, there is no saying to what heights he would have attained. A man selected for command of a battalion from the staff, or some other arm of the service, with a view to promotion, should have been sent to his unit without comment of any kind, and, after the lapse of such time as would comply with the requirements of decency, the Corps Commander, or someone from G.H.Q., should have seen the Brigadier responsible for report, and candidly ask his opinion after explaining the case and its special circumstances.

Of course there were and always will be weaklings who will sign almost anything to acquire favour, such being one of the factors in a great military organization where the human element plays a predominant part. It is not found so much in business life. The very sound rules drawn up by Sir Douglas Haig for promotion and adverse report were founded on that which he possessed to the full—honesty and a sense of justice and duty. It was only when dishonesty, weakness, or favouritism crept in that bad soldiers were promoted and good ones were kept out, to the detriment of the State and the chances of Victory.

Another peculiar case came my way in 1917, at the same time as the one about which I have written. A regular Major, who had been a subaltern with me, and just junior to me in days gone by at Aldershot, came to me to command a battalion. I was delighted to see him, both for the renewal of old acquaintanceship, and also because I knew him to have been a very smart young officer in every way. He had been adjutant of the regiment, and in 1914 had been wounded. Having stayed at home till 1917, when he came to me, and having been a brigade-major in a home service brigade, he was, of course, unfamiliar with modern war when he took over

command of a battalion, but I was willing to make every allowance, and thought he would soon fall into our ways. I explained all kinds of details to him, after lunch, on the day of his arrival, but alas! my efforts were in vain. The difference between 1914 and 1917 was so great that many men who had not been soldiers at all till they joined up in 1914, but who had since learnt all there was to learn of war, be it a science or an art, knew much more than my old friend could ever hope to learn, and even they were learning something new every day. I tolerated a great deal in the hopes of improvement, as I knew I would not be let down from the point of view of personal courage, as the 63rd and 96th did not turn out that kind, yet he had to go, as he could not assimilate modern conditions. The S.O.S. went up one night without a cause, the first and last time such a thing ever happened in the old brigade.

The two cases I have cited firmly convinced me that if regular majors of 1916 date were not employed on the staff or in command of brigades or divisions in France by 1917, they were of no use to us for war, and I acted accordingly. I completed my team of Colonels from my own available personnel. By the middle of 1917 the four battalions were commanded by Plunkett, who had been Sergeant-Major of the Royal Irish Regiment in 1914, and had received his commission into the regiment early in the war; after he had won the D.C.M. at Le Cateau (he was recommended for the V.C.); Benzie, a Scotsman who was a civil engineer in Ceylon and who had been to Gallipoli with the Ceylon Planters' Corps, in which he was a Second-Lieutenant; Andrews, a man who had taken part in many revolutions in South America, and who had run away from school in 1900, to fight in South Africa in the ranks of the Yeomanry, and Kennedy a lecturer at the London School of Economics. In addition to the battalions the machine-gun company was commanded by Harrison, a

rubber-planter from the Malay States. There never was a fighting team quite like that. There never was one which did quite so much in the same way.

These four battalions, by the middle of 1917, had gained for themselves a name as the most indomitable raiders of the British armies in France, and, in the opinion of some best able to judge, were coupled with my old battalion, the 9th Royal Irish Rifles, in this respect. These achievements were not accomplished without petty jealousies cropping up. The constant lists of immediate rewards irritated people, for, although we knew a great deal about the ways of the enemy, we did not neglect the art of writing up our recommendations, knowing full well we were writing for those who often dealt in paper and with whom the pen was sometimes mightier than the sword.

It is not possible, even with the exercise of all the utmost care in the world, to insure a hundred per cent. of success where raids into the enemy trenches are concerned. So many things may happen to interfere with the plans. An enemy sentry may be posted at a different place, an odd bit of wire may trip a man up and thus break the silence and so on, yet we were lucky, as we only had one failure over a long period.

On one occasion we effected a most important identification which caused trouble. Colonel Plunkett was responsible for the successful identification of a new German Division twenty-four hours after its arrival in the line opposite us. I never told anybody what raids we were going to carry out, not even Divisional Headquarters, as such things were inevitably talked about, and, if a prisoner happened to be taken by the Germans, from one of our other brigades, or even our own, disaster or loss of life would perhaps follow, as most prisoners talk—under pressure. In accordance with the rules of the game, immediately a prisoner was taken by us a telegram was

sent to G.H.Q., giving the locality in which the capture was effected, together with the regiment and Division to which the man belonged. In this particular instance the Corps Commander rang up someone at Division early in the morning to say how pleased he was with the capture, but unfortunately they knew nothing about it, the officer on duty who had transmitted my message having gone to bed! Next morning I met our G.S.O.1 and C.R.E. in my lines and had a chat with them, and asked the former what he thought of our raid of a few hours previously, in a most natural way, but he merely and dryly remarked, "You might have told us," to which I replied, "Secrecy spells success!"

A few days later we had another raid, and it failed, on account of a man tripping up in the dark and making a noise. They were on to me from above. I received a "snorter" signed by a subordinate staff officer, on account of which I was going to see the Corps Commander with the Divisional Commander, and only refrained from doing so on detecting a great unintended compliment hidden away at the end of the letter which censured me for "risking men," pointed out the "reason" for raids (which none knew better than did we), *but*—and here is the compliment—ordered me to refrain from raiding till the brigades on my right and left had each carried out one! By the same dispatch-rider I received a letter from my old Divisional Commander, Major-General Sir Oliver Nugent, who had just come into the Corps area, asking me to tell his G.S.O.2 all about the local conditions for raids and hoping my battalion commanders would help his of the Ulster Division, which, of course, they gladly did.

The last and most unusual raid which we had in the Gouzeaucourt area was rendered more interesting by the introduction of an 18-pounder gun right into our front line by our artillery, who were always out for blood. This

gun, having been man-handled right into the line over the top by the gunners, was fired off at a small enemy salient, which it enfiladed and raked at point-blank range. As a whole sentry group which was always posted in the Salient by night and which was there five minutes before zero was blown sky high, the only identification procurable was a coat and number. The men of the raiding-party secreted themselves quite close to the German wire while the point-blank bombardment continued, and rushed into the gap directly the last round had been fired.

By September, 1917, the brigade was at the top of its form, save for a rest. It had become well seasoned. It ruled in no man's land, tails being accordingly in the air. Young troops are like young dogs. They require careful handling before being gradually shot over, and led up to the point and more serious work. The conditions for carrying out this policy were ideal for us in 1917. The *morale* was excellent, which is best illustrated by a little story. Two patrols of the South Wales Borderers went out from opposite flanks of our line, simultaneously. By mistake they met in no man's land, each mistaking the other for the enemy. Simultaneously they charged each other, all of each side becoming casualties. Both commanders of both patrols were in the casualty clearing station together when each recounted to the other how they had "knocked —— out of the enemy!"

It was with hearts in the right place, and a full sense of responsibility and pride on account of what they had done, and were going to do, that the little Welshmen left the line after a spell of ten months, for "rest" and in order to train for what was to be their greatest ordeal and triumph—the battle of Bourlon Wood.

The Cinderellas had come into their own. While out at "rest," training for this epic, our greatest care was for the men who had had a rough ten months of it. We worked hard in the mornings and played hard in the after-

noons and evenings. When we worked, all worked. When we played, all played. We had no spectators.

Major-General Sir Harold Ruggles-Brise had gone home to England for a well-earned rest to command a Division which, having its headquarters in his beloved Essex, was ear-marked for the defence of part of East Anglia against invasion. I cannot think of any more suitable arrangement than that a Ruggles-Brise should defend Essex, the county of his birth and ancestry, in which he now lies, taking that long last sleep of rest which comes sooner or later with inevitable certainty to all good soldiers and sportsmen who travel through life trying to play the game.

Truly the General deserved a rest in 1917, if any man did. He had been very badly wounded in the early part of the war while commanding a brigade. Needless to say, he had been as short a time as was conceivably possible on the sick list before resuming duty. During the latter part of the war he served Sir Douglas Haig as Military Secretary at G.H.Q., during which period that close friendship arose which ultimately led to Sir Harold undertaking the onerous duties of General Secretary of the Officers' Association, at the request of Sir Douglas. If ever officers owed a debt of gratitude it was to Sir Harold. No one will ever know the details of the devoted service he gave to war comrades right up to the moment of his death. His influence at the headquarters of the Officers' Association was wonderful, no man being quicker to read a character or penetrate a trouble. Many a service family owes its very existence to-day to "Ruggles" or "R. B." It is no exaggeration to say that when the menace of sudden death confronted him in the summer of 1927, the officers' Guardsman friend was less able to combat with that old physical energy which had held him in good stead on the battlefield of Flanders, because of what he had given to the ex-officer between the years 1919 and 1927.

I only once saw the General riding a horse in France.

The Germans had gone back, miles had to be covered, so he rode to save time, as the mud was literally knee-deep. On all other occasions he walked to keep fit, and he walked to the end. On the Tuesday before his death he was walking to Lords, so he told me, when I met him near Paddington, and on Friday he had passed over. The Puritan spirit, the embodiment of the Glory of England, had gone to rest.

A very different type of Guardsman succeeded Sir Harold Ruggles-Brise in command of the 40th Division, but he was just as "white." When General Ruggles-Brise came up to see me at my headquarters in the quarry near Gouzeaucourt, from which General Sir Beauvoir de Lisle was alleged to have escaped from the Germans in his pyjamas a few months later, he said he was going home and that a "white man" called John Ponsonby was going to take his place. Next afternoon he brought the "white man" up to see me and say good-bye. I remember we all drank tea and ate buttered toast and jam. I fought and served under Major-General Sir John Ponsonby during three of the biggest battles of the war, Cambrai, the Somme 1918 and the Lys, and, as one says, in reply to the orderly officer, there were "no complaints," at least so far as I was concerned. "Ruggles" was right, he was a "white man." I am going, when unavoidable, in these pages, to call Major-General Ponsonby "John" for short, not because I wish to be familiar, far from it, or impertinent, but because to all, behind his back at least, he was John, is John and always will be John.

I think there were times when Sir John Ponsonby may not have approved of me, or at least my methods. We were so different. He was always amusing. I was not. A good soldier, and a firm friend, a man once said to me, "He has only one fault, if fault it is, he suffers fools too gladly." I, on the contrary, was always, during the four great years, so engrossed in war that I could not tolerate

anything or anybody I thought might clog the wheels of victory. Thus we were opposites, but, as his was to command and mine to obey, I shall ever be grateful for the entirely free hand he gave me.

While at rest, prior to the big battle, we came out of our shells a bit, as a brigade, and entertained our hostess, a French Countess, whose name I forget, and her daughter, to dinner and dance, but we could not possibly do so alone. "John" had to come and help, and magnificently he answered the call, throwing himself into the dances, with heart, soul and legs, with that enthusiasm of which he alone is capable—in return for which we gave him probably the worst dinner he has ever had in his life, the cook having failed in a manner utterly unworthy of the Welch Brigade.

Most good things come to an end sooner or later, and at last the time arrived for us to march up to the battle. General Ponsonby had inspected all the brigades of his Division at ceremonial drill. It was with great pleasure that we learnt that ours was the best brigade in that respect, the South Wales Borderers being the best battalion. The "duds" of a year ago had acquitted themselves as I knew they would, there being "no bad soldiers, only bad colonels." I do not suppose a brigade more trained to the minute, more keen for battle or more confident of success ever existed, than was the brigade of Welshmen which I had the honour to command, and which "eyes righted" to the Divisional Commander as I stood beside him on a pouring wet afternoon two days before the battle. Yet officers from G.H.Q. at Divisional Headquarters offered long odds against the capture of Bourlon Wood, on the morning of the battle, which rather goes to show that sometimes staff officers do not understand how and why objectives are taken. I wish they had come up to us and laid the odds! We should all have spent our next leaves at the expense of G.H.Q., no small item, I can

assure you, reader, as my Staff Captain, Reggy May of the Welch, could have produced astounding vouchers for leave expenditure perhaps second only to those of the Divisional Commander himself!

The battle of Bourlon Wood needs no description from my pen, neither is it expedient to discuss the intricate details of a desperate soldiers' fight in these pages. There are, however, certain aspects which are worthy of note, more particularly from the pen of one who was there.

There is a decided conflict of evidence as to what were the original objectives for the battle of Cambrai, of which the action at Bourlon was a part. The official records say the objective was "limited." I cannot accept that view. I think it became limited, owing to the action of the enemy and our lack of thrust. At a conference which I attended at Luchau some days, or perhaps weeks, before the battle, I was given the possibility of one of three tasks, namely, (1) an attack at Bourlon (which actually fell to our lot), (2) the taking up of an outpost position some ten miles farther east, or (3) an advance-guard scheme still farther east *covered by a cavalry screen*. The carrying out of the latter tasks would have meant that a very considerable breach had been effected in the enemy lines.

On the afternoon before the battle of Bourlon, General Fanshawe, through whose Corps we were passing, came to see me, and told me the battle was going well, "But," he added, "I fear the cavalry have lost their thrusters; they have all gone to the tanks and infantry." This was apparently the case. Two of my Colonels agree with me when I say there was a short period after we captured the wood, prior to the arrival of fresh German troops, when the cavalry could have got through and exploited our success. A noteworthy occurrence prior to the battle, so far as we were concerned, and certainly one which facilitated our task of the morrow, was that during the few hours of daylight which remained, after our approach

march had been completed, we carried out a hurried reconnaissance of Bourlon Wood. This probably surprised the enemy somewhat, as we must have appeared a formidable cavalcade, not unlike cavalry in the distance. Four colonels, four seconds in command, four adjutants, sixteen company commanders, four battalion intelligence officers, four battalion medical officers, four quartermasters, five machine-gun officers, five transport officers, to say nothing of the brigade-major, staff captain, intelligence officer, signal officer and myself, with grooms mounted on spare horses, made, in all, a total of about sixty mounted men. We rode along the supporting line of the Ulster Division from the left flank in order to get to our place of deployment, and passed through some of my old battalion, who turned out and cheered for all they were worth as we galloped past, going hell for leather in extended order, like M.I. as of old. A hostile aeroplane spotting us, followed, flying low, spitting fire from machine-guns, no damage being done.

Late that night our headquarters were ensconced in the catacombs of Graincourt, which had recently been occupied by the Germans. There we fortunately found two German soldiers, who were able to continue at their job of looking after the German electric light, while my French interpreter discovered a huge pile of explosives with time fuses attached, set ready to go off in a few hours, which he forced German prisoners to move.

George Franks, commanding 19th Hussars, came into my part of the underground world, to see what the situation was like from our point of view, and distinguished himself by upsetting a bottle of port and many glasses in the dark, which was a real disaster. I had not seen him since he was A.D.C. to Sir Gerald Morton, whose daughter he married, at the Curragh. Alas, later in the war, he was killed at the head of his regiment.

The battle of Bourlon Wood was so intense, so full of

incident, so crowded with moments of doubt and anxiety, that now, eleven years after, I can merely say we took the wood and held it for days against German counter-attacks too numerous to keep count of, save in the official records. Whereas the capture and retention of the wood was an epic, for which my little Welshmen were responsible, the failure to capture the village of the same name was a tragedy which reflected on the whole battle. The 40th Divisional gunners proved themselves what we knew them to be, namely, first-class artillery men without whom we could not have retained our grip on the captured area. We were superbly supported by infantry and dismounted cavalry during the later stages of the fight, without whose help we should have been outnumbered. The Guards sent us a battalion of Grenadiers under Viscount Gort (who had not yet got his V.C.), and Scots under Colonel Stirling; while the 15th Hussars, dismounted, and the 14th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, together with all kinds of oddments, contributed to our success.

Of my own Colonels, Benzie of the Borderers alone came out unscathed, earning a bar to his D.S.O., and recommendation for promotion to command of a brigade. Unfortunately he was severely wounded in March, 1918, so never became a brigadier. Plunkett of the Royal Welch collapsed from heart trouble shortly after he came out of action. He was also awarded a bar to his D.S.O. As he came out to me again we shall hear about him later. Colonel Plunkett was recommended for the V.C. by me, for "thirty hours of sustained valour," which recommendation reached G.H.Q. intact. There is no doubt about it that his successive actions of cool, calculated courage saved the day on many occasions, and, what is more, he could quite well have done as many do, when similarly situated, namely, nothing. I believe the objection to the award of the V.C. on this occasion was that he had "merely done his duty," a ridiculous contention, often put

up to obstruct, as if carried to its logical conclusion nobody should ever get anything if we are, as we should be, all out to do our duty even till death. Andrews of the 17th Welch gained a French Croix de Guerre, and was so severely wounded that he could not return to me till August, 1918. Kennedy of the 18th Welch was killed at the head of his battalion, leading a charge during the first German counter-attack.

I was informed by General Ponsonby some three weeks later that the Guards, when under my command in Bourlon Wood, had objected to my "methods." I had placed Colonel Benzie in command "inside the wood," "no matter who else or what else arrives, irrespective of the accident of seniority."

Presumably one or even two perhaps of the Guards Colonels were senior to Benzie, but how was I to know who would come to our aid? Moreover, the whole of my plan was based on the experience gained by me at the battle of Spion Kop in South Africa, nearly eighteen years before. There I had seen a whole position abandoned, owing to "unwarrantable assumption of command," to use Lord Roberts's phrase, and the major plans rendered inoperative, owing to the same cause. I was taking no chances. "What we've got we hold" was the order of the day. Benzie knew the ground and the men and the whole position from the outset. He was my senior Colonel, and I trusted him, and equally so Plunkett. My other two Colonels were just as good in battle, but had become casualties. Therefore I said, "Benzie will command in the wood, and after him Plunkett, and tell all concerned, so that all may know." The Guardsmen are always and at all times beyond comparison, and can therefore be forgiven for not knowing about some of the situations of war which occur to other mortals from which they are always immune. Had they told me they were coming they could have taken over complete control while

I snatched sleep which I badly needed. But I did not know. Moreover, just as it would be unthinkable for a Guardsman to leave, say, Spion Kop, so it was unthinkable for me to leave Bourslon Wood. Perhaps no Guardsman has ever seen what I once saw, namely, two officers arguing as to who was senior, their whole attention riveted on their little petty vanities instead of on their jobs, when a Fulani warrior came up behind them and knocked them both on the head! That was not good for England. Anyhow, as I told General Ponsonby at the time, the great thing was that the wood was taken and held through the valour of many brave men from which the Guards are not excluded.

I seem to have got into no end of hot water during that highly successful battle, the second "incident" emerging through the kindness of a third-class General Staff officer who complained to his Chief, who complained to my General, who complained to me, that I had told the third-class General Staff officer to go to the devil, after he had come into my dug-out and woken me up, during the last stages of the intense battle, when I was snatching the first bit of sleep I had had for three days and three nights, despite the fact that there was a notice on the outside of the door "G.O.C. not to be woken up. Inquiries to officer on duty first door in passage on right." The only thing I marvel at is that I did not *do* something to him! The young man said he was afraid to come near me *ever again*! As I was sorry for the young fellow, I wrote and asked him to forgive me, and told him not to be an ass and to let savage sleeping Generals lie in future.

I had met Mr. Lloyd George, during the time we were training for Bourslon Wood, when he was most interested in my little Welshmen, and asked me to let him know how they acquitted themselves. I accordingly sent him a narrative of the battle, which he acknowledged in a most courteous letter.

I handed over the line to that wonderful soldier

Brigadier-General Bradford, V.C., who was killed next day.

People sleep in strange places on battlefields. When I struggled back through the mud from Bourlon Wood at 2 a.m. I was guided to Brigade Headquarters by my servant's North of Ireland voice, and went to ground like a rabbit into what proved to be the family vault of the Havrincourt family, which had been used by the Germans as a telephone exchange in the Hindenburg line. By the dim light of a torch I could see the feet of members of some of my staff, who were asleep on stretchers, sticking out of the niches which at one time contained coffins. I had been given a very special bed on a stone slab which had, no doubt, at one time supported the mortal remains of some famous member of the family, as I had a little slightly elevated recess all to myself. The coffins had, of course, been removed by the Germans long before, but the musty smell was dreadful. In the early hours of the morning I woke up to find myself fighting Germans in my sleep for all I was worth, sending up reinforcements and, like *Oliver Twist*, asking Divisional Headquarters for more to take their place in reserve. It was always so with me after a big battle for many nights, in fact the only antidote for subsequent restless nights was to be put into the line again at once. Those at Divisional Headquarters never knew or realized the strenuousness of our battle headquarters at brigade. If they had done they would never have compared their own conditions with ours. Perhaps we went "all out" too much, but we gained objectives and kept touch with our units.

The morning after the night before in battle, as in drink, brings some sad reflections, though of a different and more pleasing kind. In drink much is found to have been expended with a gain of nil; in battle all has probably been expended with a gain of everything that is worth while. So it was with us on that November morn in

1917, when we, the survivors of an exclusive order, wended our weary way back over the Hindenburg line, through "old no man's land," to Metz, which we knew so well. Out of a total of about two thousand seven hundred actual fighting effectives we had lost all but about four hundred. All the officers save twelve were no longer on this earth, or in medical hands.

But those were not my thoughts. I was thinking about the training of reinforcements for the next battle (as it is only the last battle of all that is really worth winning), when I looked up and saw the Commander-in-Chief of the British armies in France. There is only one word which can describe Sir Douglas Haig as he appeared to me on that occasion—"fine." I had not noticed his approach, and was on foot, busy with my thoughts and the avoidance of shell-holes and mud-traps. There he was, on the opposite bank of the road to me, close to the old German line which his men and tanks had captured a few days previously. A cavalry soldier, he looked every inch of one with steel helmet, and box respirator at the "alert," "sitting" his charger as only a British Light Cavalry soldier can. He was preceded by an orderly with pennon on lance, and followed by a mounted escort of his own old regiment.

Stopping, he looked down upon and uttered words of encouragement, congratulation and thanks to my little Welshmen as they passed. "Who are you?" I heard him ask in his calm, subdued voice. "The Welch, sir, whatever," sang back a gallant little soul. "Well done, well done," repeated the great Field-Marshal, over and over again, for five minutes, while "the remnants" marched by. As I saw "the Chief" saying a few words to the Brigade-Major, Goodliffe of the Royal Fusiliers, and, as one of us at a time was sufficient to give an account of our stewardship, I passed on, unnoticed and unobserved, with the words "Well done" ringing in my ears.

I do not know if any celebrated painter has ever painted the late Sir Douglas Haig in the battle setting in which I actually saw him in November, 1917, within three or four miles of the firing-line (he was going up to confer with Lord Byng at Havrincourt), but it struck me, at the time, what a really wonderful and suitable study he would have made, surrounded by his cavalry, his mud-stained, battle-weary but victorious Welch infantrymen aglow with pride, yet tired and contented, the fearful mud, the old hostile trenches, a sand-bag or two and roads being corduroyed by hard working Engineers, a dead horse and a broken-down wagon, the whole dominated by the friendly presence of the Mounted Chief. It was battle to the life.

Next morning, at 6 a.m. (it was too cold to stay between the blankets), I had a talk with my old Chief, Sir Oliver Nugent, sitting on his bed, while he lay there telling me how the Ulster Division had done in the Cambrai battle. "They have been a bit sticky," he said. "Thiépvál wiped the Division out, Messines did us a bit of good, but the Salient killed us," he lamented. "It is not a question of *morale*, it is men, and we have not got them." And then he gave forth in a way which surprised me much. "I am sorry for you, Crozier," he said, "you are in the wrong shop; you have cut off too many heads to be popular!"

When I was at home on leave on one occasion I lunched with Sir James and Lady Craig, as the present Lord and Lady Craigavon then were. Sir James had been A.A. and Q.M.G., of the Ulster Division before our departure for France, and had been compelled to resign owing to ill-health, a circumstance undoubtedly brought about by over-work on behalf of the Division. He had been very good to me, and I had seen a great deal of him. At one time I had been offered command of a battalion outside the Ulster Division, which I refused, as Colonel

Craig, as he then was, asked me to stay on. Just prior to the departure of the Ulster Division for France, Colonel Craig very kindly promised to look after the pension for my wife and children if I should be killed, which relieved my mind greatly, as I knew with his influence in official circles he would speed up the delay of issuing money.

When I lunched with him and Lady Craig on this occasion, he asked me to go down to the House of Commons with him after lunch, as he held a minor Government post and wished to introduce me to some members of the Government. This I could not do, as I had promised to see wounded officers and men in hospital that afternoon, and was later leaving town for two days prior to my return to France.

When I returned to London I was surprised to find a telephone message waiting for me, asking me to go and see Mr. Bonar Law, whom I did not know and with whom I had never had any correspondence or communication. I went to see Mr. Law out of curiosity, and after a short conversation in which I saw no point, I was asked if I had been recommended for a Division, to which I, of course, replied that I did not know, but I added I thought it most unlikely, as I had been told by a very senior General officer that I had "cut off too many heads," at which remark he smiled. I was then told that it could be arranged at G.H.Q., that I should get the Ulster Division. I was, of course, very surprised and asked what was going to happen to General Nugent? Was he going to get a Corps? Mr. Law thought not. Ultimately I tumbled to the plan, of which I did not approve and said so, as, although naturally any soldier wants promotion, yet not at the expense of his Chief, to whom he owed everything in France, namely, battalion promotion, shielding from an attack of the Adjutant-General's Department, a D.S.O., and promotion to a brigade. I said all this and

left, adding, as I opened the door, that I would call in at General Nugent's headquarters on my return and tell him what I had heard.

This I did. Ultimately General Nugent was sent off to India, which altogether put a stop to his war chances, while Major-General Clifford Coffin, V.C., was promoted to the command of the Ulster Division. Coffin was a real good soldier, a sapper, who commanded a brigade in the 8th Division. He and I used to relieve each other sometimes in the mud of the Somme in the winter of 1916-17. He won his V.C. as a brigade commander in the Salient.

At the close of 1917 one of those funny little things happened which made one open one's eyes. My Staff Captain, P. F. Hone, a really practical temporary war-time soldier, had in pre-war days been employed by the late Lord Rhondda, who was a member of the Government. While on leave Hone happened to see Lord Rhondda and told him some of the defects of our promotion system, which was at the time a perfect scandal. A few days later Hone was suddenly telephoned for to go to Divisional Headquarters, which was a very unusual occurrence. Before going over to Division he confided in me that he had been talking to Lord Rhondda and feared he was "in for it." Now I liked Hone because he got things done and was a cheery soul, while others detested him for the same reason, so I told him not to worry and that I would fight his battle (which he has on many occasions since done for me). To his utter astonishment he was told, on reaching Divisional Headquarters, that he had been promoted D.A.A.G. What Division wanted to know was how it had been done, as they had never recommended him for promotion! Of course he said nothing but thought the more, as he knew I had been recommending him for promotion to D.A.A.G. constantly for months past, which recommendation

Division had evidently held up without acquainting me of the fact.

Hone had always been anxious to become a brigade-major, but I thought (and here I was wrong) that he had not sufficient experience of regimental soldiering to be a staff officer on the General Staff side. Now, confronted with G.H.Q. promotion, over the head of the Division, and ordered to report for duty as D.A.A.G. to another Division, he refused his promotion, preferring to stay with me. Luckily, as a vacancy had occurred for a brigade-major to go home for a six months' staff course at Cambridge University, I nominated my Brigade-Major for that course, thus securing the acting vacancy for Hone to try his hand as brigade-major for six months. I was quite willing to suffer his defects (which proved to be nothing but pure imagination on my part), as I knew the man and could make a change if necessary, but that was a totally different thing to recommending him for promotion elsewhere, against my better judgment, through which trouble might have been caused to the Army.

This little incident can teach us a great deal if we care to profit by past failures and malpractices. Here was a man who honestly told a friend, who happened to be a Cabinet Minister, in war-time, of certain notorious defects which he knew of in our military system—dishonourable defects one might almost say, as it is surely as dishonourable to promote a man merely because he is a friend, there being no other reason, as it is dishonourable to neglect to promote an efficient man because he is not a friend, or because his promotion would hurt the feelings of a friend or cause inconvenience by the possible removal of inefficient friends from office? In any case the State suffers. But the case is actually rather worse than that. The man was ultimately ordered to be promoted by G.H.Q. because the Cabinet Minister had brought his remarks to private notice. Hone might have been a

"dud" for all G.H.Q. knew, although I take it they knew from Lord Rhondda that he was not. Divisional Headquarters had received this recommendation for promotion month in and month out. They did not concur, but they failed to tell me so. That was bad. Why did they not concur?

The actual lesson to be learnt from this promotion case, which was allied to thousands of other cases of a similar nature, is that in peace as well as in war, if England is to prosper to the full extent of her abilities, we want people, as servants of the Crown, who are above that reprehensible habit of always keeping their eyes on "the main chance," i.e., self-profit, instead of strictly studying the interests of the State, and the State alone, in all things. Lord Hewart's book, "Power and the People," deals with much illuminating matter regarding the usurpation of power by ministries and departments, but a whole book could be likewise written on those deeds of absolute official irrectitude, committed by those who, from time to time, forget their trust, answer falsely or act with impropriety, in order to save their skins, the hides of their friends or the good name of their departments.

Lieutenant-Colonel Hone was awarded a D.S.O. and bar, and bars to his M.C., after this little *contretemps*.

CHAPTER X

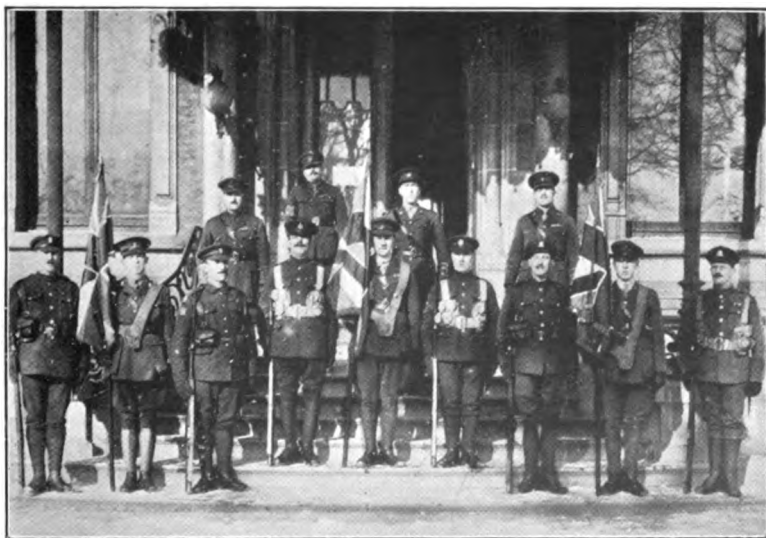
THE YEAR OF VICTORY

At the beginning of the year 1918 we received a very great blow. On account of the shortage of men (Lord Kitchener had always said he never worried about the first million, but about the last hundred thousand) it had been decided to reduce the infantry brigades to a three battalion establishment. On paper this does not perhaps appear a very formidable alteration. In theory each brigade would lose one battalion, the balance of men being used as reinforcements, if and when required for the Army. With us things were actually different. Our men were all Welch. There was a Welch Division in existence which required reinforcements. I lost three battalions. They took away my Royal Welch Fusiliers and South Wales Borderers (the best battalions in my command), and left me a choice of keeping the 17th or 18th Welch. I decided on retaining the 18th, as it was slightly less knocked about, as a result of the Cambrai battle, than the 17th. The 18th Welch was by that time commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel W. E. Brown, D.S.O., M.C., who had been both adjutant and second in command of Benzie's S.W.B.'s.

Colonel Benzie took to command and lick into shape the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, of another brigade in the Division, as he was a Scotsman. As the Welch brigade had done so well at Bourslon Wood, it was thought by some that it would be a good thing to have another National brigade in the Division, with the result



HEADQUARTERS OF THE 119TH INFANTRY BRIGADE AFTER THE ARMISTICE.



ROUBAIX 1919. THE 110TH INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS, THE COLOURS WITH THREE COMMANDING OFFICERS AND BRIGADIER.

that a Highland brigade was formed. The exponents of the art of hasty training forgot, or perhaps never knew, that an alteration is not made in the ingredients of any mixture by merely altering the labels. However, Colonel Benzie did "electrify" the Argylls, and made them fight in the big German push as they had never fought before.

If it had not been for the fact that our hearts were steelled to Victory within the brigade, I think the blow of losing three whole battalions and a machine-gun company, now imbued with great memories and knowledge of their ascendancy over the enemy, at one full swoop would have broken our spirit; as it was, we had enormous difficulties to face. On the top of our loss we were told the Germans would be sure to attack in the near future, and that we should then be "in it." We also had to reconnoitre the whole of the Corps front, which interfered with the training of the "imported" battalions.

It was unlikely that brigadiers would send us their best battalions to make up our establishment. It was much more likely they would send their worst. Had the training of the armies in France been level, efficient and in accordance with the obvious principles necessitated by constant losses due to attrition, it would not have mattered much which battalions were sent us, as all would be good.

As it happened we received two battalions which were far below the requirements of modern war, but we had to make the best of a bad job and get them ready as well as we could, so as to meet the final onslaught of the enemy. The two new battalions were from the East Surreys and Middlesex. When being put through their paces for two days we found them to be greatly wanting. They did nothing quick enough. Officers hesitated while, of course, other ranks followed suit. They lost their equipment or were deficient of vital items, and failed to realize that the rôle of infantry is to get to grips with the enemy with cold steel supported by fire of their own making, aided by the

fire of others. The Middlesex thought positions could be taken and held by indirect machine-gun fire, a state of affairs which their new Colonel, Metcalfe by name, a veteran musketry expert, soon altered. The East Surreys thought that "spit and polish" was good enough for all things. It is, of course, good, but only as an outward and visible sign of an inward and soldierly grace. The Welch, my stalwarts, were of quite a different stamp, which caused me to resort to the unpleasant necessity of making the two new battalions stand by and watch everything the Welch did in the field, for several days, while I in addition lectured them myself.

We were favoured with a visit from Sir Douglas Haig during this process of "electrical infusion." He chatted for a long time with me on the side of a road on the subject of training. I was surprised at his knowledge of the latest intricate details of infantry tactics, as taken from the recent pamphlets, but crossed swords with him in regard to their application to the practical necessities of battle. "Look at that," he said, while watching the final assault during a demonstrational attack by the 18th Welch; "all your officers would be killed!" Of course he was right, they always were. He was referring to that three seconds lead, which, in actual war, despite all that the books may say, British officers have to take upon themselves to give, in order that they may be able to say "come on" and not "go on" to their men. And then, at his request, I explained what I thought the actual final phase of an attack was, "a few very brave men struggling on triumphantly, seeing nothing but the enemy, hearing and thinking nothing at all, puffed out with red blood like frogs, gaining adherents as they went, acting as does a magnet to scattered steel shavings, till they 'got there,' and how they got there God knows, and even that secret the Almighty will not reveal!"

I was at that time honestly exercised in my mind over

Colonel Metcalfe of the Middlesex, not on account of his age. He was about sixty, but because he had only been in France a very short time, and I told him so. My difficulties were, at that moment, many, and I felt it would be well-nigh impossible for any man with such short experience of modern and unique conditions to teach a battalion which had to unlearn before it could learn in the time available. The East Surreys were different. They deceived me, as I thought they were better than they were. Undoubtedly they would have been had they been better led. I was wrong over Colonel Metcalfe for this reason. He was suddenly called upon to fight from the night of 21st March, 1918, when what was required from a colonel was that glorious good old English virtue, courage, which in his case he possessed to the full and which never had, of course, been in doubt—gallant English gentleman as he is.

Metcalfe, from 21st March, 1918, right through the battle, which, so far as we were concerned, lasted five or six days, despite the previous poor training of his men, despite their low *morale* and narrow outlook, despite all their other defects, turned them into real "Diehards" on the battlefield itself, by his own efforts, courage, leadership and example. With the cry of "Diehards die" he worthily upheld the tradition of Albuera. On the other hand, the East Surreys actually retook a village without artillery support, but only after great "pressure" on the telephone from Brigade Headquarters. During those few tough days the little Welshmen under Colonel Brown were still my standby.

The new much altered and alas! much less efficient brigade managed to scrape through the Somme battle with actual credit, thanks largely to the help of a brigade of Guards which was doing duty with the 31st Division on our left. The presence of the Guardsmen meant to me that our left flank was as safe as houses, which enabled me to keep the Welch in reserve for shock action. We shared

an aerodrome, as headquarters, for a time with this Guards brigade commanded by Lord Ardee, who had with him, as Brigade-Major, Sir Victor Mackenzie, whose brother Jim had served with me in Nigeria and who died there.

Vast quantities of liquor stored at the officers' club and Field Force canteen, which gradually came into our front-line system, as we withdrew by order, caused me some anxiety, lest it should be consumed by my tired and often thirsty men. We broke dozens of bottles of the best whisky, which could not be taken away and which was unsafe to be left about, but the cigars shared a different fate, as those were distributed to the men. When I went up to the firing-line to the Welch I was much amused to see them indulging in rapid fire to their hearts' content, at glorious targets, close and unmissable, as the Germans advanced in mass formation, their tin hats at an angle on one side of their heads, while out of their mouths, at the other, stuck huge Coronas.

The intricacies of battle are irksome to read, much less write about, so we can well leave the brigade safely asleep in billets, in the reserve area, save for one man whose name was Metcalfe. The Colonel no doubt too wanted some rest, but took it in a different way. The Chief Constable of Somersetshire, for such he was at the time, as well as being a much misjudged soldier by me, was a good sportsman, so, finding a rod and line and a stream, he went trout-fishing while his Dichards snored. History does not relate if he caught any fish, but while he was fishing at one end of a village, far from the madding crowd, the King of England was looking at his weary soldiers, wrapped up in blankets, sleeping the sleep of the just and victorious, at the other.

Thanks to the lack of uniformity of training throughout the British armies in France, we were a bad brigade just prior to the Somme battle in 1918, as the introduction of two new battalions to take the place of my best two, which had been broken up, spoilt the general level or standard.

Fortune had, however, favoured us, as we came through the second Somme better than might have been expected, though our casualties were heavy. Had we received a respite of six weeks, which could have been used behind the lines for training, we could have approached the pre-Bourlon Wood standard, but it was not to be.

After the Somme battle we were put into a "quiet" part of the line south of Armentières on 7th April, a part so quiet that it even alarmed my batman, Starrett, who had been with me since 1914. "This place is too quiet," he said to me when I was having my tub the first night in the line, "I don't like it. Jerry"—he always called them Jerries—"will blow us out of this to hell one night and then where will we be!" he said, laughing loudly. He was right. Starrett knew what G.H.Q. should have known and in fact did know. The fly in the ointment was the Portuguese Division in our midst. It was a fly which the Germans encouraged and even fed by hand. G.H.Q. was about to relieve that Portuguese Division, as they knew the danger—it was so obvious. The tragedy was not that they failed to relieve the Portuguese in time, but that they had ever put them into the line at all, or let them remain there for months, well knowing their defects. They must have known that in the Peninsular War the Portuguese only fought well when led by British officers.

And so the inevitable happened. The Portuguese being attacked early in the morning of 9th April, 1918, instantly took to their heels and ran, only, it is said, to be eventually stopped by the sea. Even then things would have been better had the general standard of training of the British armies in France been higher and more generally level throughout. A brigade designated in advance to move up instantly to protect my flank never arrived at the proper place at all. It should have been there nightly, in anticipation of events. Our guns were on the exposed side of the river. Thanks to the non-arrival of the right defensive

flank brigade, Colonel Metcalfe and his Diehards, sadly reduced in numbers and encumbered by untrained reinforcements, were fighting in their billets almost before our front-line troops were in action.

The rest of the story is easily told. The Welch, on the right of the line, fought their way back to me and across the river, the East Surreys on the left surrendered almost to a man; I heard the tragic story from returned prisoners of war, after the Armistice—the less said about it the better. Colonel Metcalfe with the Diehards and Brown with the Welch put up a gallant show for five days, and undoubtedly helped to save England and the Channel ports. My own staff held the bridge over the River Lys at Bac St. Maur for several valuable hours, which enabled the 25th Division to deploy, every one of the six brigade staff officers being decorated for courage shown on that occasion. Meanwhile the brigade on our left had been split in two, the Brigadier being in one direction on *our* right, while his men were somewhere on our left attached to another Division. To add to the difficulties the 120th Brigade, which had become the Highland Brigade just prior to the Somme battle, had lost the Argylls and gained the 2nd Royal Scots Fusiliers, while our own artillery, having been left in action down south, were not supporting us.

On 12th April, after Lieutenant-General Sir Beauvoir de Lisle had taken over command of XVth Corps from our old friend of the Somme mud and wire days of 1917, Lieutenant-General Sir John du Cane, who was taking up duty with the Supreme War Council, I was placed in command of the remnants of the brigades of the 40th Division, with orders to hold the line at all costs near Strazeel, the Divisional Commander and his staff and the other Brigadier, who was senior to me, being moved back somewhere. A curious order was issued to me by wire from Corps, at Strazeel, to the effect that any officer giving ground would have to account for his action before a court martial, and that I was

to make this known to all concerned. I did not try to do so, firstly because it could not be done under the circumstances (I had no means of getting in touch with all advanced elements), secondly, I did not and do not think positions can be held by using threats at any time, and thirdly, it would be difficult to prove such an offence against an officer.

Colonel Metcalfe had been severely wounded while leading his battalion at the end of the Lys fighting. His conduct throughout two great battles can only be described as wonderful, and for it he received a D.S.O. for the Somme of 21st-26th March, and a bar for the Lys, 9th-13th April, both awards appearing in the same gazette. He had been a District Inspector of Musketry for years, so the reader can imagine his feelings when he looked down at a rifle which had been used as a splint to keep his broken thigh more or less in place, while being driven back in an ambulance, to find that it was loaded and at full cock, with safety catch released, the muzzle being fast against his toes!

For me personally the Lys battle had been a real thriller. To begin with, I had seen it coming and had advised my superiors accordingly. Added to this I had walked along the Portuguese front on the night of 7th-8th April (the night before the attack) without seeing a single soul on sentry, although I had heard many snores from behind waterproof sheets and the like. I had found most of the Portuguese soldiers that night sleeping without boots or equipment on, while their rifles and ammunition were engrained with rust and grit and were therefore useless.

While I was going down the foreign front our patrols had penetrated more than half a mile into the German position opposite us, while other signs showed the enemy was concentrating in front of the Portuguese. I reported all this early in the morning to Division, Corps and our mission attached to the Portuguese. I saw the Corps Commander. I begged for a British Division to be sent

up by daylight. To my entreaties and remonstrances I received the reply that a British Division would relieve the Portuguese on the night of 9th-10th. I said it would be too late. It was. The higher formations were too sticky.

It so happened that the brigade on my left was carrying out a raid on a large scale on the night of 8th-9th April, 1918, and as I lay in bed half-asleep I thought the heavy gunning which was being directed on to our locality was merely retaliation from the Germans, but I was speedily disillusioned when my faithful batman, Starrett, a mere boy who had joined up in 1914 when under seventeen years of age, woke me up with an uncompromising shake and ordered me to dress instantly and put my box-respirator on at once. The farm in which we had our mess, headquarters and battle command post, and in which I slept, was already drenched with gas. The battle of the Lys had begun.

Within a short time I had received a telephone message from Colonel Metcalfe to say he was in action outside his billets in brigade reserve and that his second in command had been killed by rifle fire, while shortly afterwards Colonel Brown of the Welch telephoned to say his reserve company and front-line troops were all in action and that he was going to fight his way back to me. The East Surreys on the left front were silent, for I could not get through to them on the telephone for some time, and when I did it was only to be answered in English by a German, whereupon we evacuated all our military stores and signalling apparatus to safety across the River Lys, to Bac St. Maur, to which place Reggy May, my Staff Captain, had proceeded in order to open up a new headquarters. Unfortunately most of us lost our personal kit and belongings, as the bridges across the river were not only jammed with traffic and broken-down vehicles, but a heavy barrage was kept on them for many hours. After putting out a thin firing-line composed of cooks, etc., and sending out scouts from Brigade Head-



Photo by Lieut. H. A. J. Lamb, R.E., A.R.I.B.A., Brigade Signalling Officer 119th Infantry Brigade.

HOUPLINES, AUGUST 1918. THE 119TH INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS BEHIND THE HOUSE ON THE RIGHT, THE SIGNAL OFFICE WAS IN THE BUILDINGS BEHIND THE CHILD.



Photo by Lieut. H. A. J. Lamb, R.E., A.R.I.B.A., Brigade Signalling Officer 119th Infantry Brigade.

HOUPLINES IN AUGUST 1918, WHEN RETAKEN BY THE 119TH INFANTRY BRIGADE.

quarters, we retired by slow degrees across the river at an emergency foot-bridge. We were only just in time, for had we been five minutes later we would have been cut off by the German skirmishers.

During the opening stage of the battle the thick ground-mist favoured the enemy so greatly that it was impossible to distinguish individuals at over a hundred yards distance. We accordingly issued orders to the effect that all men in field grey going towards the river were to be shot, as the Portuguese and Germans were dressed much alike, and the latter were driving the former in front of them in order to mask our fire. Many Portuguese died that day from our fire on the field of honour while tracking in the wrong direction.

Once across the river we managed to straighten things out a bit, with the aid of Metcalfe and Brown, the East Surreys having disappeared lock, stock and barrel, leaving only their transport and a few details.

The comparative failure on the Lys, thanks to the stampede of the Portuguese, despite the fact that it won the war for us in 1918, affords a valuable lesson for future generations of soldiers, as well as to officers of to-day. The dilatory methods employed prior to the opening of the battle was appalling. The advice of those on the spot who were in the best position to judge was not taken. The guns were not moved back prior to the fight, and so were lost. The unevenness of the worth of battalions, the hopelessness of certain Commanding Officers and even Generals and the want of vision of G.H.Q., brought their own rewards, and for them G.H.Q. can alone be held responsible. It was the old story. Had Colonels Benzie or Plunkett been in command of a 40th Division brigade at the battle of Cambrai, Bournonville village would have been taken. If the East Surreys had been properly officered and trained and if the staff work had been better behind, so that the flank brigade could have been in position, the loss would not have been so great. Metcalfe and Brown alone saved the day.

After the battle of the Lys we gave a very cheery dinner at St. Omer to the officers of the 120th Brigade, with whom we had fought side by side, which was attended by General John Ponsonby and some of his staff. Unfortunately for the majority, but fortunately for a few, the lights went out and put an end to what promised to be a very festive evening!

We now really began to think our troubles had ceased, and that we would be made up to strength when, alas! bit by bit, we were dismembered, first by parting with men and then equipment, in order to make up the 121st Brigade to strength at the expense of the other two, which was a most unsuitable thing to do. We were being cursed again by paper administration, by which battles cannot alone be won. I do not know who selected the 121st Brigade to be made up, but whoever did should have known it was not in a position to fight, never had been, and probably never would be. The two S's which went far to render our war task more difficult—sentiment and seniority—were at work.

During this period of comic soldiering, for one can call it nothing else, we were in a Corps commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston, otherwise known as Hunter-Bunter, about whom so many funny stories have been told that one of my officers once seriously thought of publishing an illustrated book entitled "Hunter-Bunter," in order to make money. I believe it would have sold, as nearly every soldier knew about Bunter if not Hunter, and many knew about both. The General was a great war creation. Most people liked him. Certainly none disliked him and few took him seriously.

It was a come-down for a fighting brigade such as the 119th was, when we were not being irritated in Corps reserve, near Cassel, to be put on to digging lines of reserve trenches, but such was the case till our units entirely disappeared altogether, despite which a new Brigade-Major became posted to us! We had not asked for him. We

were quite happy, Hone and I and all of us together, yet as he was obviously capable and a good fellow who liked dogs, we accepted the inevitable. Hone again became my difficulty, that is, in finding him a good post. I persuaded him to take Colonel Metcalfe's battalion of Dichards, which he did, after some hesitation and after I had sent him home on leave to think it over. As a Commanding Officer, right up to the time he was severely wounded at the end of the war, Colonel Hone did admirable work, which only goes to show that he was right and I was wrong when he said he could do brigade-major's work in 1917. Alas! his battalion left me for another Division shortly after his promotion, but one of the little things which gave me most pleasure during the war was his subsequent award of another D.S.O., on someone else's recommendation, as it was a first-class answer to his Divisional detractors, who said he was no good.

My new Brigade-Major was Captain Anthony Muirhead of the Oxfordshire Yeomanry, who subsequently stood by me through thick and thin in times of trouble. An Etonian and subsequently educated at Magdalen, Muirhead was much more than a good soldier, as he was very clever with it all, yet unobtrusive in his cleverness. He had passed into Woolwich from Eton, but unfortunately had had to sever his connection with "The Shop," owing to eye trouble, which he ultimately overcame, hence his migration to Oxford, and his availability for service with his county Yeomanry regiment at the outbreak of the war from the ranks of the Oxford University O.T.C. Muirhead's head was a wise old one on young shoulders. After service in France with the Oxfordshire Yeomanry he became A.D.C. to the G.O.C. South Midland Territorial Division, of which he subsequently became G.S.O.3. For his reconnaissance work with us during the advance to victory in Flanders, he was awarded a bar to his M.C., while for general work with us he was promoted to a brevet-majority. After the war, thinking he would like to stay on in the Army, he became

a captain in the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, which appointment he caused to be cancelled at his own request, for private reasons. He did not, however, sever his connection with county soldiering, as he joined the staff of his old Division, and later assumed command of a battery of artillery in the same formation. During the war I had four brigade-majors—of which two, Muirhead and Hone, were very good indeed, which accounted greatly for the maintenance of a high standard of efficiency even in the heart-breaking days of 1918. Had Muirhead been a regimental officer with me in 1916, he would have become a brigade commander by 1918, with luck.

In May, 1918, we did some reconnaissance work in the vicinity of Kemmel Hill, behind the French, who were co-operating with the British. This involved the daily transportation of many officers to that area from the St. Omer region, which had then been flooded, in consequence of the German menace to the Channel ports.

I well remember one afternoon at Cassel, on our return from one of these expeditions, watching a fierce fight in the vicinity of Hazebrouck in a manner which always seemed to me to be the height of contrast in modern ideas. A few miles away was happening something which was akin to murder and sudden death, which we watched from our comfortably laid-out tables, decorated with flowers and covered with fine linen, through powerful glasses, while waiters and waitresses, neatly attired, served us with good food and wine. Outside, in the narrow street of the historic town, which gave rise to the old rhyme,

“ The Grand old Duke of York,
He had ten thousand men,
He marched them to the top of the hill,
And marched them down again,”

could be heard the steady tread of soldiers, still marching to the top of the hill and marching down again. They had

to, as there was no way round! I wonder how many tens of thousands of British soldiers sympathized with the Duke of York between 1914 and 1918. If the reader will take the trouble to compare the old narratives of British campaigns, with the stories of which we are all so familiar, he or she will find much which, to us, was new to read about which was ancient history to our ancestors.

For a short period we became a Brigade Headquarters, with no troops to look after save a signal section, while we were employed in siting trenches and drawing up schemes on paper for the evacuation of coolies and labourers from the Far East, in case of attack. But our stagnation was not to last long. Our greatest work was to come.

G.H.Q. had decided to reconstitute a good many Divisions which were to be composed of "B" men—so great was the wastage of war. The 40th Division, of which we formed part, was to become a "B" Division. Men shrugged their shoulders. "B" men would never do any good, they said; poor souls, they did not know much. G.H.Q. had, at the outset, a chance of proving that they knew then how to train troops. It was one of those cases when the choice, at the start, between the right policy and the wrong policy spelt complete success or failure. I warned them. I wrote a personal letter to the Adjutant-General Department on the subject, others did likewise, but of no avail. They deliberately chose the wrong, slipshod, easy policy, the line of least resistance, and deprived the Empire of first-class fighting men, who, at the moment, were worth their weight in gold.

"The worse the men, the better the officers" is a safe, inviolable military maxim, which means if badly trained, badly or slackly disciplined, badly found or "*lowly moraled*" troops have to be quickly licked into shape, in an emergency, the very best and most experienced officers must be told off to accomplish the task. What did G.H.Q. do? They drafted "B" men to the selected Divisions

commanded by bad generals and colonels, and in many cases "B" company officers! It became a case of the blind leading the blind. Luckily for me, and by pure chance, I got my old warrior of Bourlon Wood fame, Colonel Plunkett, as a Commanding Officer of a battalion of low category Inniskilling Fusiliers. We set to work at once and started weeding out. True, a General from G.H.Q. came down and inspected men in the ranks and gave certain orders for casting off clearly unfit men, but the game of chance was present. We were dealing in live men; they were dealing in paper and figures. We had only to face the enemy; they had to face the critics as well.

G.H.Q. did a most astounding thing at this crisis. They issued a printed order, signed by Sir Douglas Haig, which we were ordered to read out to the "B" men. In this document the men were complimented on their behaviour, told that they would hold quiet parts of the line (my memory immediately flew back to the Portuguese!), *and that they would not be put into offensive action!* Let us examine this italicized sentence. They would only be used for defence? But offence is the soul of defence! Who could promise this to men in "a quiet part of the line"? Who had the choice of quietude? Obviously the Germans in the middle of 1918! Such a promise could only be made by a "Department," not a man—who would not be present when it was broken by the man who had to make it and read it out. But, looking at it from another angle, was it not desired to make these men as fit and efficient as possible? Surely, yes. Then why tell them they are such crocks that they cannot be used? The flame of leadership was lacking in this respect at G.H.Q., where all men had a number (unless there was a friend at court). Paper men cannot march, fight, shoot and kill just because they are given a different status.

For my part, I put the "offensive" order (the word is obviously used by me in the displeasing sense, and not in

the sense used by Marshal Foch and others) in the fire and forgot all about it, *and it was as well I did*. Colonel Brown, then in another Division, knowing the wiles of certain men and being ordered by his Brigadier to certify, in writing, that he had read it out, did so, of course, but, wise man, prefixed a rider of his own to the effect that of course he and they (the men) knew perfectly well that when G.H.Q. gave a promise it was broken, when convenient or expedient, and that this promise was all "bunkum." But here is the moral. Colonel Brown's men fought splendidly. The men of another battalion in the same brigade "kicked up rough," and said a promise had been given that they should not go into the offensive. In the one case faith had been kept, in another case confidence had been abused.

For our part, a constant procession of "dud" colonels came up and down to me from the base till I was satisfied. I had no idea till then that such people existed in France. They came from what was called a "C.O.'s pool," into which some good men occasionally fell, by accident, and clambered out of as soon as they could, while others revelled in the waters of stagnation like tadpoles in a cess-pool. And all this was when we wanted the very best commanding officers we could get! My dear old friend, Colonel Andrews, fell into the pool by mistake, and, clambering out, finding out where I was, limped up to me (he never walked right after Bourlon), when I immediately posted him to command of a battalion. Of course "the Base" made a dreadful fuss when they found out what had happened, but he was with us, and the slogan, "What we have we hold," although undoubtedly good for use against the enemy in front, is sometimes just as useful against the pantomime in rear.

We "electrified" our "B" men into activity by a simple process, perhaps akin to psycho-analysis. We got them all to play games, take part in sports, take a pride in their new regiments, march, shoot and forget about

their ills—real or imaginary—with the result that, during the last three and a half months of the war, they behaved like and carried out the duties of “A” men, while they endured hardship with the usual sang-froid of the British private soldier, outstripping an “A” Division on their left, in pursuit of the retreating enemy still strong and resolute and protected by machine-gun rear-guards.

H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught inspected us near Hazebrouck in 1918, shortly after which notable event Major-General John Ponsonby made his bow to the Division on transfer to command of the 5th Division. It was a happy thought which prompted H.R.H. to inspect a brigade of real veterans, of which type he is not only a living personification, but the embodiment of everything that is good for the soldier, be he young or old, to behold and know about. We were not slow to seize upon the useful Royal lesson of disinterested service brought before us by the presence of the Royal Field-Marshal in our midst, which we passed on to “the old and bold,” as they liked to call themselves. Incidentally a hostile shell just missed the car in which H.R.H. drove off by a few yards.

What was 40th Division's loss was 5th Division's gain when “General John” left us, while I lost a considerate commander. In coming to say good-bye to me he sang out praises to such an extent that I became embarrassed, while in private he told me he had that very day recommended me for command of a Division, which, however, came too late to be of use to me, as the war was over just as I was about to be appointed to a Divisional command.

Major-General Ponsonby was succeeded in command of the 40th Division by Major-General Sir William Peyton, who knew something about me, having served in Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry during the South African War.

While I was in temporary command of the Division,

of which one brigade was then in the line, two notable events took place.

His Majesty the King visited us, accompanied by the Army Commander, General Sir Herbert Plumer (now Lord Plumer, ex-High Commissioner of Palestine). We waited upon His Majesty in pouring rain at a dismal cross-roads, where I was introduced to the King's presence by the Corps Commander, Lieutenant-General Sir Beauvoir de Lisle. In turn I introduced my G.S.O.I, Lieutenant-Colonel Black, 12th Lancers, Major Coutan, D.A.A.G., and Captain "Jimmy" Gage, A.D.C., after which, at His Majesty's request, I gave a detailed account of our vicissitudes since the second battle of the Somme.

At this time General Ponsonby, with his 5th Division, was not far off on our left, and received orders to proceed southward, while I was temporarily commanding the 40th Division, which meant that we had to go over to him *en bloc* to say *au revoir*, while he came to us for a similar purpose. It so happened that on the very night we were to dine with "General John," he had been commanded to dine with the King, so left orders that none of us were to be allowed to get up from the dinner-table till he returned, which order was, needless to say, complied with. As the wait was pretty long "A" mess of 40th Divisional Headquarters was in very good form, with the possible exception of myself (who was, as usual, on lime-juice, but, as a matter of fact, I always found I could raise as much enthusiasm and enjoyment on that uninteresting beverage as the ordinary man often could on a bottle of "the boy"), when the General did arrive. He, too, had been on lime-juice, as the King and his household, as an example to "our John" and the rest of his loyal subjects, refrained from strong drink during the war, yet our host was, as usual, full of fun, which shows that the lime-juice could not have been very demoralizing. But I was told there was a bottle in the car!!

When General Ponsonby dined with us *en passant* I asked my orderly officer, Charles Knowles, the famous baritone singer, to come over from brigade to give us a concert after dinner, which he did with great success; but by far the greatest hit came "well on" in the night, when the conduct of the Divisional band, which had played during dinner, was undertaken by the G.O.C. 5th Division in person, perched on a chair, in the approved style, with baton and left hand. It was a coincidence that the next time I set eyes on "J. P." he was doing the same kind of thing on Armistice night in Paris. Some of us had rushed off from the line, after 11 a.m. when the last shot had been fired, and proceeded by car to Paris for a few hours' "rest," and, at a late hour (we had come from near Tournai) looked in at Maxim's, only to catch a glimpse of the General, mounted on a table, conducting not only the ladies present, but also the men and band to the strains of "Madelaine!" It was really one of the funniest things I had ever seen in my life, and one over which I almost split my sides with laughter, and with which I shall always associate the last days of the World War.

The other happening was the celebration held at the headquarters of the 2nd Army on 4th August, the anniversary of our entry into the war. I do not think I ever heard the recession rendered more impressively than I did on that occasion, after which the troops marched past General Plumer. I was accompanied by Lieutenant-Colonel Archer-Shee, M.P., who commanded a battalion in the Division, and Lieutenant-Colonel Black, the G.S.O.I., after which we lunched together at an hotel in Cassel. On the saluting base I stood between General Plumer and Millicent, Duchess of Sutherland, who was in charge of her own hospital in the forward area. It was many years since I had seen this beautiful lady, twenty in fact, almost to the day, as in August, 1898, as a lad, I had been deputed

to take her in to dinner at Eishken Lodge, Stornoway, where she was staying with Mrs. Platt when visiting the Island of Lewis in connection with the Harris tweed industry, for which she did such a lot of good work for the crofters. In 1898, at dinner, I could hardly take my eyes off this beautiful lady whom I then thought the personification of everything that was lovely. In 1918, standing by the wayside of a road leading to the firing-line, with the veteran soldier on my left and this vision of loveliness on my right, I could not help thinking that, although opinions may change with the passing of time, the opinion I formed as a boy in 1898 was right. She was indeed lovely to behold.

Our newly constituted category "B" brigade went into action, seriously, for the first time in August, when Colonel Plunkett was awarded a second bar to his D.S.O., for turning the Germans out of a position which dominated our line, and was recommended for command of a brigade. It was just as well I had not promised the men they should never be put into offensive operations, as, once in it, they never came out till after the Armistice had been signed. In order to encourage the new battalions I offered money prizes for prisoners captured on patrol or in raids. I offered £5 for the first prisoner, and £1 for every other one captured in each battalion, for a definite period, and am glad to say I had to pay up to the extent of over £15. I am aware that this action of mine was criticized at the time, as was a similar action in the Sudan over thirty years previously by Lord Wolseley. I was told that British soldiers do their duty without monetary bribes, but Sir Garnet offered £100 to the battalion making the best time in the boats over the cataracts during the journey up the Nile, and I don't see much difference between defeating the Nile and defeating a German. Anyhow, what was good enough for Lord Wolseley was good enough for me, and that was my answer.

Just as I was having serious misgivings as to the command of one of my battalions, a Commanding Officer fell into my arms like manna from heaven, and he was just as welcome. I knew I had to replace a colonel, yet I had no one to put in his place. I was afraid to apply to the base for one, lest I should get a "dud" from "the pool," when one day a new regular captain of an Irish Regiment arrived for duty with a battalion. At the beginning of the war he had been a N.C.O. in the Irish Guards. I spotted O'Connor—for such was his name—and, to his great surprise, told him to take over command of the North Staffords. He "electrified" that battalion and really transformed it within ten days. A few days later, after the capture of Armentières, we were ordered to find a Guard of Honour for the President of the French Republic, who proposed to visit that place. I ordered each battalion to parade a guard, saying the one I considered best would perform the duty next day. O'Connor's guard was the best—he was an ex-Guardsman and therefore equally good in action as on parade.

Our final thrust at the Germans took place on the night of 8th-9th November, 1918. The enemy in front of us was withdrawing according to plan, but leaving machine-gun nests behind which caused heavy casualties. We therefore decided to force the River Scheldt, and did so at Pecq, thanks to the energy of the East Lancs. (Lieutenant-Colonel Andrews) and North Staffords (Lieutenant-Colonel O'Connor), who crossed at night on rafts, and cleared the German rear-guard out at dawn, capturing a field-gun in the subsequent action.

When G.H.Q. tell me they knew how to train soldiers during the war, I point to that last fight on the River Scheldt on 8th-9th November, and the march and out-post line taken up next day. They said the men who accomplished that feat were no good. They promised them (despite the fact that they used them all later) they

would only be used as "Garrison Guards." The "B" men of the 119th Infantry Brigade having done well at the recrossing of the River Lys in October at Houplines, proceeded to lead the 2nd Army at the crossing of the River Scheldt in November. They effected a very difficult crossing of a canalized river in the dark. They advanced and fought an advance-guard action. They marched some nine miles and took up an outpost line in the presence of German cavalry, having captured a Uhlan. Yet these men were of "B" category! The truth was that the whole idea that these men could not fight or march was rubbish. They were only "B" category on paper, in the field they were "A."

The bungling of the training problem by G.H.Q. throughout the war cost the nation the equivalent of tens of thousands of men, and seriously affected the man-power problem. Strategy and tactics are all right, but there must be a proper system of training too. The reason why this was not so was that certain men always had their eyes on "the main chance" for themselves and their pals, instead of on the interest of their country.

While we were digging trenches behind we had been in Sir Robert Wigham's Corps, but later were transferred to Sir Beauvoir de Lisle's XVth Corps (in which we had fought in April on the Lys), and with that Corps we finished.

After our men had crossed the Scheldt in such fine style, Sir Beauvoir met me on the road and told me to send in twenty names for the Military Medal (which he could grant), and as many names for the M.C. as I thought fit, which was a great compliment to Colonels Andrews and O'Connor and their men.

After the cease fire had sounded we returned to the Croix-Roubaix area and settled down to enjoyment, mild drills, demobilization and educational training. Apropos of the latter, I had an unusual experience. General

Peyton had told me to impress on my Commanding Officers the importance of the scheme, which I did, ordering them to tell their men. Next day an officer of the East Lancashires came to my headquarters, and asked to see me. The Staff Captain finding out what he wanted, told me he thought I had better see him.

The story that this company commander had to tell was that on a battalion parade that morning Colonel Andrews (who was a very great friend of mine, a *bon camarade* in the true sense) had "explained" educational training in no uncertain terms. The Colonel was alleged to have said it was "no — good," that learning how to grow potatoes would not "fill your stomach," and that the Divisional Commander, for thinking such was the case, was "a — goat!" What he had said about his Brigade Commander I was not told! I immediately sent for the battalion Medical Officer and the Adjutant and put them into one room, while I saw Colonel Andrews in another. My old friend looked a bit "bleary eyed," and, denying nothing, was put under arrest by me, after which I saw the Doctor and Adjutant, and made certain arrangements. Andrews went straight back to the château in which he and all his officers were living, and, having lined them all up, explained that he wanted the name of the officer who had split on him, and was on the point of drawing a revolver from his pocket when he was collared from behind by my Staff Captain, and disarmed.

I had tea that day with General Peyton, Andrews having been evacuated under arrest and observation, and obtained the former's authority (which I could not give as I had put him under arrest) to release him from arrest and all consequences, on medical grounds. Armed with these powers I set off in a car and found the gallant Colonel near Lille, when I had a chat with him and the Commanding Officer of the hospital in which he was detained, matters being fixed up satisfactorily.

Andrews had volunteered to go to North Russia directly after the Armistice had been signed, and eventually, having been evacuated as a mental case to England, got there. His subsequent experiences were sensational. He was taken prisoner by the Bolsheviks in 1919, when he only escaped execution by pretending to be a Labour leader, and was in a Moscow jail till 1920, when he was released, with others, as a prelude to the opening up of trade negotiations with this country. He was with me in Ireland in the R.I.C., from which he resigned because I did. He died as a result of an accident in a motor garage in 1923, in close proximity to me, being killed instantly.

Such was the end of a very adventurous life. He began the war as a private soldier, and in less than two years and a half had become a Lieutenant-Colonel, won a D.S.O. and M.C., and passed the senior officer's course, while later he won the Croix de Guerre with palm, and received a very severe wound which kept him in England for nine months, despite which he was "in it" at the end, receiving a further "mention" for services rendered during the last three months of the war.

An officer once asked me why it was, seeing that Andrews was a friend of mine, and that the doctors had certified him as being temporarily irresponsible for his actions, I had put him under arrest, the answer of course being that he was a friend of mine. I placed him under arrest *before* the doctors got to work, and I was thus enabled to tell the men of his battalion the truth regarding the whole unpleasant affair, from the point of view of discipline.

Our chief task in the brigade, after the last shot had been fired, was to reach a good understanding at Croix with our French hosts. This could only be accomplished by keeping the men cheerful, and being kind to the population which had been through a very trying period

under German rule. It was our desire to leave an impression on the minds of those people, young and old, which would be a pleasant memory for all time. Christmas afforded a good opportunity for us to show our good feelings towards the French.

There were some fifteen hundred school children in our billeting area, and for these we did what we could. Each battalion looked after the children in its area, the whole brigade effort being co-ordinated. One day the 40th Divisional follies gave a special entertainment at the Roubaix Theatre, for which we paid. The children, headed by British bands and colonels, and martialled by representatives of all ranks, who thoroughly entered into the fun, marched the mile and back under the Union Jack and Tricolour, while subsequently they sat down to "tea and a tuck-in," being waited upon by the officers and men. The Mayor of Croix, entering thoroughly into the effort, attended the performance at the theatre, which Sir William Peyton also graced with his presence.

Prior to the first day of demobilization, all the officers of the brigade dined together at the French Club at Roubaix, a smoking concert being subsequently held. The colours of the three battalions being uncased and hung up during the dinner, added a touch of peace-time reality to proceedings, which were far from sombre. General Peyton and my old Brigadier, Colonel Couchman, attended this final merry meeting, which terminated early in the hours of a cold and frosty morning, which added to the difficulties of walking home.

We had some silver trophies in the brigade, which included a bugle, which was competed for at intervals by all battalions, for singing on the march. As we were fast vanishing, we did not know what to do with these, till someone suggested they should be presented to the 15th Hussars, of which our Divisional Commander was Colonel, in memory of the effective co-operation of the

15th with our brigade at Bourlon Wood. We were all very pleased when General Peyton accepted these old relics for his regiment.

Of course the officers could not dine together without the other ranks doing something together too, so we took the Opera House at Lille for the night, when Leslie Henson was producing a very good pantomime. We took it in turns to sit in the special box, which had been erected for the Kaiser, and in which he had once sat with the Crown Prince.

As I had been deputed by Sir Beauvoir de Lisle to go over to London to give evidence before the War Office Committee on the constitution of a Division, I was afforded an opportunity of expressing an unprejudiced opinion on war matters, which pleased me just as much as the three days' leave I managed to wangle at the same time. This was, as things turned out, to be my last leave from France. I had had a good many leaves, all of which had been spent, save one, in the same way. There was only one thing which could ever get my mind away from France, when on leave, and that was a musical play or revue, so I accordingly and invariably booked seats for every night, and every possible afternoon, for those low-brow entertainments which amused me!

During the time of demobilization in France, each service battalion, other than those of Rifle Regiments, received a colour, which was presented on a ceremonial parade by a Corps Commander. In the XVth Corps, on these occasions, the new colours of all three battalions of each brigade were trooped to the music of massed bands and improvised ceremonial. We held our parade in the Square at Roubaix, the whole being supervised by Lieutenant-Colonel O'Connor, a composite battalion being formed under his immediate command, while the remainder of the brigade kept the ground. It is an astonishing fact, but true nevertheless, that Lieutenant-

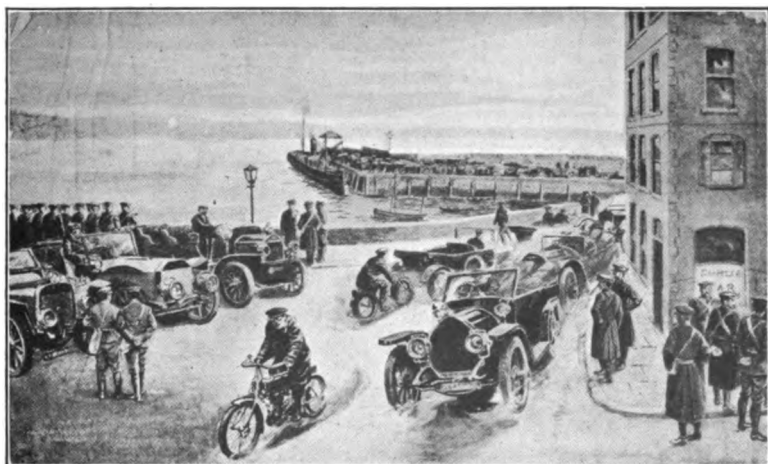
General Sir Beauvoir de Lisle told me to inform Colonel O'Connor that of all the brigade parades which had been held in the XVth Corps for a similar purpose, ours was the best by far. This is an interesting point, because all the men on that parade being of "B" category had been given up as hopeless by G.H.Q. We have a great deal to learn in regard to the conservation of man-power in war, a fact which I have pointed out to Brigadier-General Sir J. E. Edmonds, the official historian of the war.

In February, 1919, I assumed command of the 40th Division, and reduced the same to cadre, vice General Peyton, who proceeded to the Rhine to command the cavalry. It would be an impertinence for me to criticize the late G.O.C. in Chief of the Scottish command, but I am entitled to say that my happiest soldier days were spent while serving under him, and that whether it was in action, in billets, in conference or in the post-war 'Armistice days, when under him all possessed a feeling of absolute safety.

We had two notable people in our midst in the spring of 1919, after we had been transferred to the 5th Army, under General Birdwood, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Sir Douglas Haig. The former came to gain experience, the latter to say good-bye. As a rule, soldiers are out of their element while dealing with dignitaries of the Church, so it was with some temerity that I proceeded to Army Headquarters at Lille, in response to a request of the Army Commander to meet His Grace. There were some thirty Brass Hats in the huge *salon*, while the Archbishop, supported by Talbot, then a Chaplain and now Bishop of Pretoria, sat in our midst. As bad luck would have it, I caught the speaker's eye (in this case the Army Commander), who, in a cheery voice said, "Now come along, Crozier, and tell His Grace all about it!" As nobody had been told anything about anybody, and as there was no agenda, I fell rather flat and asked for a cue,



Photo by Lieut. H. A. J. Lamb, R.E., A.R.I.B.A., Brigade Signalling Officer 119th Infantry Brigade.
HOUPLINES. THE AUTHOR'S HEADQUARTERS WERE IN THE CELLAR UNDER THE BRICKS AND RUBBLE.



GUN RUNNING AT BANGOR, CO. DOWN, 25TH APRIL, 1914.

which I received from Mr. Talbot. Eventually, I kept the pot boiling for fifteen minutes, while expounding a scheme whereby the Church could keep in touch with the demobilized men, and a hundred thousand men could, for a start, migrate to the Dominions, under proper control of their old officers. I was asked to put both schemes into writing, which I did, but as I never heard another word in regard to either subject, I conclude I wasted fifteen minutes of the Archbishop's time, to say nothing of the time of thirty Brass Hats, who would otherwise have been playing bridge or roller-skating!

The Commander-in-Chief's visit was, of course, quite different. He had come to thank, say *au revoir* and wish us good luck, and very well he did it. For each, in that room at Roubaix, he had a kindly word, to each he said the right thing in the right way, and then departed as quietly as he had arrived, without fuss or ostentation. What a great man he was! What a lesson he taught by his acts alone—deeds not words.

And so my time, too, also came, and I departed from the land of mud and slime which, having been saved by Britain's valour, was eventually to straighten out and grow up anew, full of fresh vigour. To me France had become a home from home.

Now the great adventure is but a dream—but what a dream!

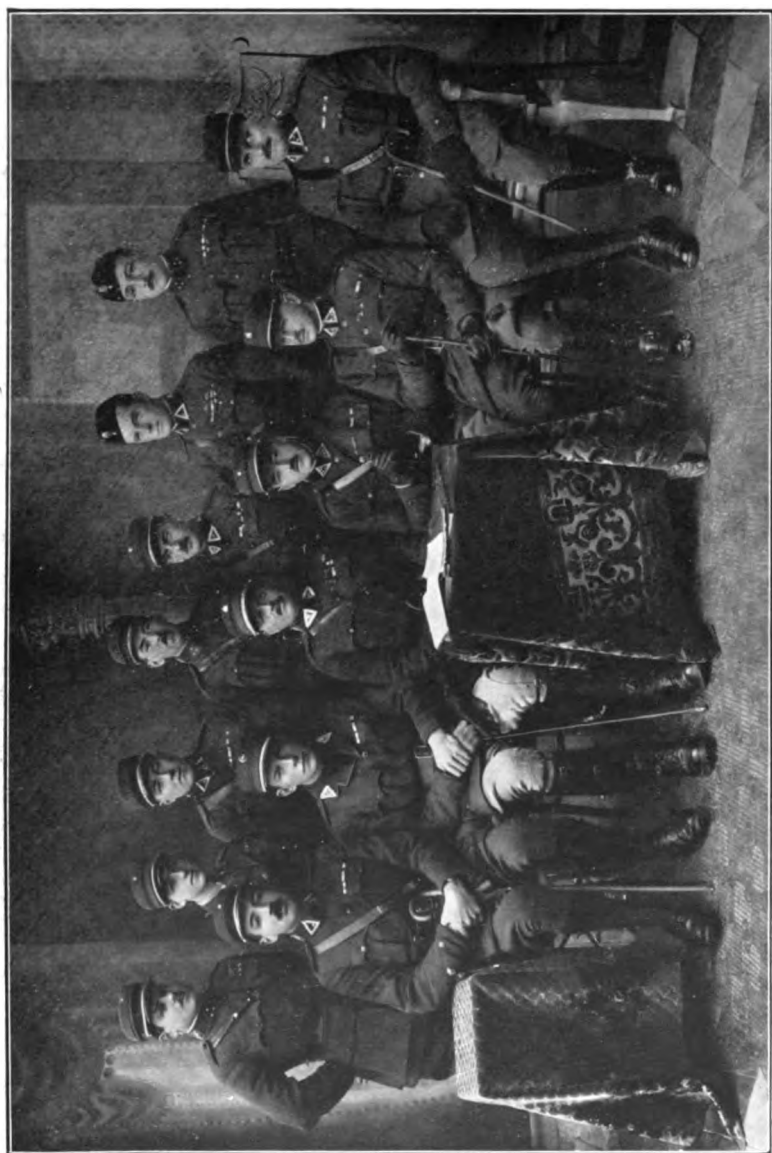
CHAPTER XI

LITHUANIA

I **CROSSED** the Channel to England in company with the late Earl of Craven, who was acting as a King's messenger, and who kindly placed his cabin at the disposal of several brigadiers, as it was very rough. With me was Brigadier-General Tudor who had commanded the 9th Division in the XVth Corps, as a Major-General, and who had come down a step in rank like the rest of us, as the various establishments were reduced. I had seen a good bit of General Tudor during the final stages of the advance to victory in Flanders, at Corps conferences presided over by Lieutenant-General Sir Beauvoir de Lisle, as I sometimes commanded the 40th Division in the absence of Sir William Peyton.

I remember an argument at one of these conferences which had to be referred to the Corps Commander for decision, as my Colonel Plunkett and Tudor's Colonel Mudie were both on the list for promotion to brigades, the question being which should take priority. Another amusing incident occurred on one of those occasions, when General de Lisle, on whose left I was sitting, forgetting I was present as an acting Divisional Commander, started discussing with us as to whether a Brigade Commander called Williams or I should top the list for promotion to Major-General. Eventually I withdrew from the meeting, *pro tem.*, for decency's sake!

For two months I commanded the 3rd Welch Regiment at Chatham, and eventually completed the disembodiment



BRITISH OFFICERS IN LITHUANIAN UNIFORM. THE AUTHOR IS IN THE MIDDLE.

of that special reserve battalion at Cardiff. It speaks volumes for the Quartermaster (Major Holt) and the Adjutant (Major Shannons) that, despite the fact that thousands of men had passed through the ranks of the battalion between 4th August, 1914, and 1st August, 1919, and that the regimental funds and accounts ran into thousands, I never had a single query from the paymasters, owing to the good management of these two officers. During the last two months of the existence of the battalion, we were able to hand over a substantial sum of money to the charities of the Welch Regiment, of which we are now joint trustees with others. Unfortunately the sum was not as great as it might have been, as, during the war, there had been extravagance.

During the two months which I spent at Chatham we were employed quelling mutinies in various parts of the Southern Counties, a distasteful job rendered none the less easy because there was invariably an understandable cause, owing to bad management, for although mutiny can never be condoned, it can invariably be averted.

While at Chatham I was commanded to Buckingham Palace, to receive from His Majesty the insignia of the three orders, the companionship or commandership of which he had been graciously pleased to bestow upon me, as a recognition of the wonderful work done by my men from Ulster, my little men from Wales, and my veterans from all parts of the United Kingdom, in the presence of the enemy. His Majesty, remembering me from the meeting at the cross-roads in Flanders in August, 1918, during a downpour of rain, inquired how we had fared in the final stage of the war, and uttered words of congratulation which will be for ever treasured by me as a precious memory.

In 1919 I had occasion to be in Paris, where I went in order to receive the insignia of the French Croix de Guerre with palm from General Degoutte, Commander of the 6th French Army, in recognition of the manner in which

my "B" veterans had carried all before them in Flanders during the final advance to victory, when I was asked by the Lithuanian representative at the Peace Conference, then sitting at Versailles, if I would proceed to Kovno in order to help to reorganize the newly-formed Lithuanian Army. I agreed, subject to certain conditions, which were settled later. I was to take officers of my own selection, who were to receive pay at British rates in accordance with our rank in the Lithuanian Army, which was not to be lower than our British rank. In order to show good faith, my A.D.C. was later handed a cheque for £1,000, to be given to me for preliminary expenses. In order to be free to organize, I telephoned for my old Quartermaster, Captain Newton, to come to London, to administer this and other money at the Lithuanian Legation, which he did. I handed him the cheque for £1,000, with which he opened an account at Cox's bank.

My choice of officers fell on Major A. Muirhead, my late Brigade-Major, as Chief of Staff, who received the rank of Colonel in the Lithuanian Army, Major E. Mills, late of the Middlesex Regiment, who assumed his substantive British rank of Major in the Lithuanian Army, and Second-Lieutenant Marshman, late Royal Flying Corps, who became my A.D.C. and typist. I also consented to the introduction of Lieutenant-Colonel Monk-Mason, who had just finished his tenure of command of the Munsters, while I accepted Colonel P. J. Woods, later, after I had left England for the Baltic. It will be remembered that Colonel Woods was at one time my second in command in France, and was a M.P. in Northern Ireland.

I may say definitely from the outset that our mission to Lithuania was a ghastly failure, due to various causes.

Colonel Muirhead, on receipt of a telegram from me, when he was fielding in a cricket match in Oxfordshire, asking him if he would join me, almost instantly jumped into a taxi (the railway strike being in full swing), and

drove to Reading in order to get to London by train. Major Mills was in London. Both these officers left in advance of me for Kovno. I arrived in Lithuania shortly after them, after an adventurous journey through the heart of Germany in Lithuanian uniform.

An amusing episode occurred at Kovno on our arrival. I took my wife and daughter with me to Lithuania. At Berlin, where we stayed several days, the news was wired on to Kovno that a General and his daughter would arrive on the morrow. This news set the young Lithuanian officers (some of whom knew a little English) to work rubbing up the English language, in order that they might be "in the running" for favours which can be bestowed by English girls, of whose attractions they had heard a great deal. As our train steamed into Kovno they were all expectant, as they thought a General's daughter must surely be of an eligible age. Our journey had been a long and trying one. Much was their surprise when my wife and her maid stepped out of the railway carriage, carrying a huge bundle of sleeping humanity, rolled up in a fur rug. It was the General's daughter, aged ten! The jaws could almost be heard going down with a click.

We received the greatest assistance and support from Colonel Rowan Robertson and the British Military Mission during our stay in Lithuania, and also the greatest consideration and kindness from the British Foreign Office Mission. Unfortunately for us, these two official British missions frequently clashed on questions of policy, which was not helpful.

When I arrived at Kovno I found the Lithuanians engaged in three wars on three fronts, viz., against the German Iron Division in Western Lithuania, the Bolsheviks at Dvinsk, and the Poles at the Vilna boundary. The situation was decidedly comic, as, although the Poles and the Liths were fighting side by side against the Bolos at Dvinsk, they were snarling and sniping at each other near

Vilna, a state of affairs which has, apparently, after eight years of indulgence, become a habit. At this juncture the Chief of the Foreign Office Mission to the Baltic proposed to the Lith and Whitehall that I, as a neutral, should command a mixed army of Poles, Liths and Latvians (or Letts) against the unruly and unwanted Germans. The Lithuanians would have nothing whatever to do with this proposal, as they feared if the Poles once got to the shores of the Baltic, they would be tempted to stop there for ever. As events have since turned out (General Zeligowski seized Vilna for the Poles in 1920 by means of an inspired coup), the Lithuanians appear to have had some justification for their fears.

In my day at Kovno, if anybody had been strong enough or sufficiently rash to wave a Lithuanian flag and shout "to — with the Poles, come to Vilna," he would have acquired a following of fanatics, in the same way as if anybody had waved the Red hand of Ulster and shouted "to — with the Pope" in Belfast, in 1914, he would have obtained a long cue of sincere enthusiasts armed with bowler hats and empty bandoliers. Luckily, in both cases, sanity prevailed.

Shortly after my arrival at the seat of Government of the Lithuanian Republic, I proceeded to the "major front" in the west, where the enemy was German, in company with Colonel Rowan Robertson. We travelled by car, and visited the outpost line on horseback. As is always the case in all armies, we found no bad soldiers, only bad colonels. The Lithuanian private soldier was, and is, "a first-class fighting man," but he was atrociously led. His generals and colonels knew nothing about tactics, and cared nothing for their men. They strung out their troops in a thin unsupported line, such as Napoleon once said was not good enough even to catch smugglers, and trusted to luck. Luck they undoubtedly had, as the Iron Division, which almost reached Riga, was forced to withdraw into East Prussia,

partly through pressure experienced by the Letts in the field, partly through a sort of battle which the Liths waged in all directions, and partly owing to the arrival of an International Commission, headed by the French General Niessel, which had been sent up North from the Peace Conference.

At Dvinsk a crisis—there were many in those days in Lithuania—arrived over an intrigue between the Poles on their right and the Letts on their left, who attacked the Bolos without letting the Liths know and thus pinched them out of the firing-line, which I really think was a good thing. It was said that the Lithuanian authorities were trading with the enemy on that front, an occurrence which was unfortunately not open to doubt. This horrified me at the time, but I now know that standards are not quite so high in newly born, moneyless republics as they are in our Empire.

At the request of the Lithuanian Commander-in-Chief, I accompanied General Merkis, the War Minister, and Colonel Kleschinskas to Riga, Walk (on the Esthonian Frontier) and Reval, in order to attend an international military conference. Merkis is now Governor of Memel, while Kleschinskas, a very able, charming Russian officer of the old Imperial Guard, for whom both Anthony Muirhead and I had a soft corner in our hearts, was recently shot by order of a court martial at Kovno for selling military secrets to the Bolos, of all people. "They say" he did it, but I cannot imagine what secrets there were to sell. Poor old Chinky, as we called him, had many enemies. Still. . . !

The conference at Walk was held in a very comfortable railway carriage *de luxe* which was said to have once belonged to the Czar. Nothing much happened at this pow-wow, beyond interminable arguments between the Poles and the Liths, who, figuratively speaking, spat at each other across a table like cats, in which fruitless pastime I occasionally joined. But I was impressed by the efficiency of the Esthonian Army, a regiment of which we inspected.

Their uniform was not new, but their equipment, arms and ammunition was in apple-pie order—a sure sign of the presence of good officers and understanding.

At Reval I received great joy. There I saw a British man-of-war, which had been frozen in for the winter, and a British Marine sentry, walking up and down on his beat on the quay. As I passed him he came to the “Present” with military precision. I shall never forget his look of astonishment when I approached him a few seconds later and addressed him in fluent English. I was, of course, in the uniform of a general of the Lithuanian Army. No one, except those who have had the experience, can realize what the feeling is to be an outcast in a strange country, such as was I at that moment, surrounded by all kinds and conditions of intriguers, talking in strange tongues. It was good to see a British sentry and the White Ensign.

On my return to Kovno I found the place in a ferment. Many more British officers had been sent out than I had use for, or the Lithuanians could afford to pay for. Some of those sent out were of the wrong type, while the Lithuanians were perturbed at having to pay large salaries to so many when the mark was rapidly falling, in addition to which there was talk of revolution or mutiny. In the midst of all this Colonel Muirhead had behaved with great calmness and sagacity during my absence. Our days in Kovno were numbered. Neither Colonel Muirhead nor I entered the Lithuanian Army with our eyes on “the main chance.” We had looked forward to rendering useful service in difficult times, when it appeared that Bolshevik influence throughout the world could best be countered by the careful introduction of British influence.

The Lithuanian Flying Corps had given me trouble from the start. One excellent fellow, Captain Carr, now of the Royal Air Force, who subsequently accompanied the late Sir Ernest Shackleton to the Antarctic, and who recently tried to fly to India in a non-stop flight, was in command.

With him was our Tom Macfie, who I believed exercised a baneful influence over the whole Corps and some of my other officers. Through the machinations of Macfie the British connection with that Flying Corps was broken up.

I had been given specific powers by the Lithuanian Cabinet, as a result of many conferences with the President and members of the Government, but the day eventually arrived when it was made manifest to me that the powers which I had been given were merely meant to propitiate me. M. Valdemaras, the late Prime Minister of Lithuania, who gave and received trouble at Geneva over Vilna, was, in the end, my chief opponent. I told him I would not be a passenger in the ship, and that my powers were a sham, with the result that I resigned and withdrew my remaining officers.

There had been, in the meantime, a mutiny in the Army which was soon quelled, many ringleaders being shot.

I took leave of the Lithuanian people with mixed feelings of pleasure and regret, for I liked them and like them still. I have many friends there to-day. Strange to say, I almost like Valdemaras, as I admire his stiff upper-lip, although I cannot agree with some of his methods.

In conclusion, I would offer a word of warning about the vexed question of Vilna. When I was out there the fate of Vilna was in the balance. Being an exquisitely pretty, well-laid-out place, it is natural that the Lithuanians should have desired to retain their ancient capital within the frontiers of their new Republic. This is not the place in which to dilate on the history of Lithuania, but a study of the subject from the many books published will well repay the trouble of reading, and is, in fact, an indispensable adjunct to a complete understanding of the Vilna question. People like to ignore historic facts, but it does not pay in the long run to do so.

I very much doubt if M. Valdemaras or any other Lithuanian leader could afford, or would even dare, to settle

the Vilna question, on terms which would be acceptable to the Poles, any more than Lord Craigavon could suggest the unification of Ireland to his followers, even if he wanted to. The march of time may settle the Vilna question, although I doubt it, as Vilna is, in a way, a second Alsace. True, the population is mostly Jewish, but Vilna was seized by stealth in 1920, while Alsace was seized by force in the Franco-Prussian War. In my opinion, the Powers have only themselves to blame in this matter, as, after the coup in 1920, the conference of Ambassadors did something remarkably like what in ordinary language is called compounding a felony. Some even go so far as to say the Ambassadors had no jurisdiction in the matter, as they were deputed to consider the matter of ex-enemy territory, whereas Vilna, it is alleged, was originally within the kingdom of the Czar.

It has been said, and there may be some truth in it, that Lithuania is probably waiting for another war in Eastern Europe so as to acquire the territory she says is hers, as did the French in the case of Alsace. The obvious thing to do in that case, at least so it seems to me, is for the League of Nations to see to it, not only that there is no war in Eastern Europe, but that Vilna is lifted out of the slough of partisan intrigue at Geneva, and in Eastern Europe, by being held in trust as a temporary Free City, for time to exert its powers of healing. In this difficult case there are two known factors—the inability of Lithuania to relinquish her sovereign claim to the disputed territory and the present ownership of that territory, however good or bad the claim to the title may be. The Lithuanians might find a way out of their difficulties if the League took over the matter, but to do so there will have to be more “do” and less “talk” than is at present the fashion in connection with this matter.

Vilna is one of the acid tests by which the League will be judged in years to come, as the Covenant of the League exists for the taking on of bad bargains as well as good ones.

After my return to England in March, 1920, I saw Mr. Cecil Harmsworth, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, at the Foreign Office, relative to the chaos in the Baltic, and addressed the Service Members of the House of Commons on Lithuania in a committee-room at the House, at the instigation of Lieutenant-Colonel Martin Archer-Shee, M.P., who had not yet been knighted.



MAP OF LITHUANIA AND DISTRICT

CHAPTER XII

IRISH CHAOS

MUCH as I dislike that little pronoun I, yet it would surely be a clever man who could write his life's story without its introductory. I must therefore beg the indulgence of the reader for its considerable use in the following chapters, as in these is the story of a lone man often ploughing a lonely furrow in the middle of the road, with snipers behind the hedges on either side more deadly than any we had to battle with during war. I say more deadly, as then we knew our enemies, who were in the open. Moreover, during the greatest of wars we were all one, a devoted little band.

When Sir James Craig (now Lord Craigavon) was at the Admiralty, as Financial Secretary, in 1920, I went to see him to hear the latest news about Ulster and Ireland. The Lord Mayor of Cork had been murdered, and General Sir Nevil Macready had been appointed to command the troops in Ireland. Sir James told me two important things. The first point was that England insisted on a settlement of the Irish question, once and for all, as she was tired of it, which meant that Ulster would have to give up three counties and become a six county province with her own Parliament. The second news was that General Macready was all-powerful in Ireland and could do practically anything he liked, provided he asked for power. I also saw Lord Londonderry at the Air Ministry, who told me very much the same kind of thing. I accordingly asked Brigadier-General T. Hickman, M.P., to write



THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND HARANGUING UNRULY CADETS WHO
LATER LOOTED AT TRIM.

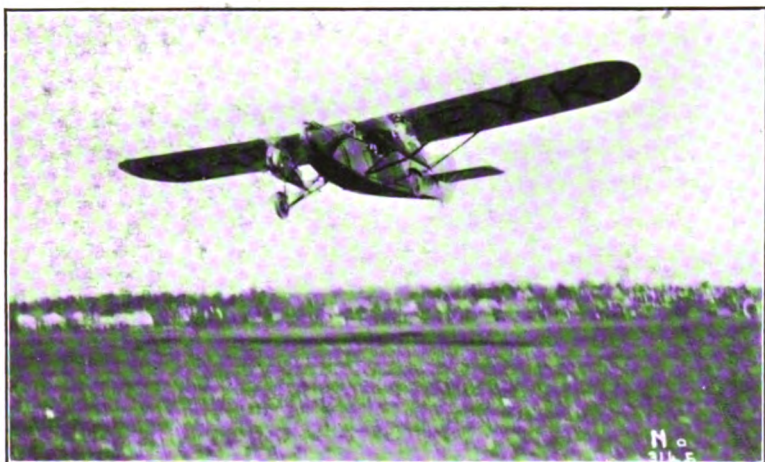


Photo by Westland Aircraft Ltd, Photographic Staff.

TAKING OFF AT YEOVIL TO FLY TO A LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION MEETING
IN LONDON.

to Sir Nevil to ask him if I could be employed in the R.I.C., the answer being that as he had nothing to do with that force he could do nothing.

I thereupon went over to Dublin myself and saw Mr. Smith (whom I had known in Belfast), who was running the R.I.C. in the absence of Sir Joseph Burn, who had been sent on indefinite leave in order that he could be got out of the way. Mr. Smith told me that things were in such a state of chaos, owing to resignations and murder of policemen, that he could not say what would happen. I shortly after this heard that General Tudor was going over to Ireland at Police Adviser to the Government, so, as I had served with him in France, I went to see him at the Army and Navy Club about going over. The General told me very candidly that Mr. Churchill was backing him, and that he would want me later, but that I would have to go over as a temporary cadet and be promoted to command of a company after my arrival, a company being the equivalent of a battalion in importance and pay. This was necessary, he said, as the whole new organization was being "camouflaged," it being difficult to get money in England, but that in Ireland it was easier, as money could be obtained on the R.I.C. vote but not on the military vote. It appears that General Shaw, who had been relieved by General Macready, had asked for more soldiers and martial law throughout all Ireland at the same time, and that as this request could not be granted, he had been replaced by General Macready.

Now Sir James Craig had said that Sir Nevil was all-powerful; if that be so—and I doubt it—we owe much to General Macready. My own belief, after reading from his own book, "The Annals of an Active Life," taking into account the obvious omissions from that book, comparing his book, in so far as his period of command in Ireland is concerned, with the Diaries of Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, who was Chief of the Imperial General

Staff at the time, taking into account his previous quasi-Military Police-Political record, the method of his appointment to the Irish command in 1920, and, having in view the inaccuracies contained in his account of his period of stewardship in Ireland, as given in his book, coupled with my own personal knowledge of events in Ireland, both in an official position and private capacity, covering the period July, 1920, to July, 1921, is that Sir Nevil's administration failed hopelessly. This view is fortified by my knowledge of what was told to Mr. Lloyd George from time to time by people best qualified to judge, by what I know to have been the thoughts, aims, devices and aspirations, to say nothing of the heartbreakings of the Judge-Advocate-General's Department in Ireland, and by what I know of the utterances and experiences of many good soldiers serving under Sir Nevil's command in Ireland.

When discussing this final stage of the history of the Union, when Sir Nevil Macready was said to be all-powerful, personalities, individual interests and abstract argument must, so far as is possible, be abandoned. We want facts. Let us have them. Here they are.

Lord Mayor McCurtain of Cork was murdered by Irish policemen, *not* Sinn Feiners. It can be so proved, as the veil has now fallen. I only mention this murder (there were many others on both sides) because from it dates particular trouble.

I hold no brief for murder at any time, by anybody, but the murder of McCurtain was committed *before* the arrival in Ireland of General Tudor. That is an important fact. From that date started the real vicious circle.

I can understand the theory propounded by some that it is a good thing to meet murder with murder, although I cannot agree with it, as I know, in practice, such an undertaking is bound to fail; but I cannot understand the practice of meeting murder with murder and then swear-

ing you have not done it, as then no credit is even gained for having outmurdered the murderers. But that is what happened in Ireland. Sir Henry Wilson protested against such a practice to Mr. Lloyd George. Did Sir Nevil Macready? Sir Henry was his Chief.

The truth was this. The Government had not the courage to raise service battalions with which to enforce martial law throughout the whole of Ireland at the same time. They, instead, adopted a half-measure; they brought in a special act to strengthen General Macready's hand, "The Restoration of Order act," which conferred upon him powers which were dangerous. Arrest and search by warrant were suspended. Coroners, juries and inquests were replaced by military tribunals, while other minor alterations were made in the life of the civil community. But it was all of no avail. Martial law, well and firmly administered, throughout the whole country at the same time was the only possible answer to the Sinn Fein policy of murder. Had General Macready possessed adequate experience he would have known this, as it is an elementary military principle that half-measures seldom succeed in war, and in Ireland there was civil war, a war of the worst kind. There is no real half-way house between well administered ordinary law and martial law, just as there is no real half-way house between the functions of the policeman and the soldier.

I regard General Macready's appointment to the Chief command in Ireland as purely a political one.

What was the result of this faltering conduct of affairs by the Government, with which apparently Sir Henry Wilson disapproved, but which had at least the tacit acquiescence of Sir Nevil Macready?

1. The good name of the British Empire for straight dealing temporarily suffered owing to the perjuring of the courts martial, and illegal acts of violence committed by Crown agents against innocent people,

2. The British Army suffered by having to endure such horrible conditions in the midst of an orgy of crime.

3. The old R.I.C. suffered by having to participate in this orgy of crime.

4. There arose up a small silent, powerful, unscrupulous, and vicious gang of men, who were out for one thing and one thing only, "the main chance," and who eventually dominated General Macready and even General Tudor. (I did not allow them to dominate me.) They almost wrecked the Empire in their efforts to establish themselves in well-paid billets.

What was required in Ireland in 1920 and 1921 was good strong military government carried out by a man of the type of Sir John Maxwell, not an *ex-Adjutant-General* and Commissioner of Police. Any commander of troops in the field, or in barracks, must get round and know, find out and see for himself. "Command" from an office is useless.

That the British Army stood the shock as it did and came away from Ireland respected and admired, it owes to the regimental officers and the rank and file, and nobody else.

I consider General Macready should have resigned on 21st November, 1920, the day of the Sunday murders of officers by Sinn Feiners, as, had he even threatened to do so, he should probably have altered the history of Ireland and would certainly have gained in reputation.

What did the Government set up instead of the strong military despotism which was required? A Police Adviser, who, having had no experience of police, was not in a position to advise! and a system of Cox and Box, whereby, when it suited the Government to put the blame on the police (which they seldom did), they could do so, and when they wanted to quote General Macready as an *ex-policeman* they could likewise do so, or when he was purely a soldier the "Black and Tans" were nothing to him! Yet he had to administer his Act!

As one who was in active control during six trying months of ill-directed energy, I can say I never saw soldiers putting on masks, disguises or the like, for the purpose of carrying out reprisals of a secret kind, save on one occasion, when a young subaltern at Limerick was disguised as a "Shinner" for the purpose of perpetrating an act of violence in conjunction with the police. The dirty work was left to others. The vicious gang which I have mentioned dared not tamper with the Army. Soldiers should always function in uniform.

The direct result of the passage of the Restoration of Order Act, which had to be administered by General Macready, was to place him, his courts martial and courts of inquiry, held in lieu of inquests, his administration, in so far as it affected the civil population and the Judge-Advocate-General's Department to some extent (*vide* the Trim case), at the mercy of the *ad hoc* Police Administration which had taken the place of the regular R.I.C. control. As the police were themselves completely at the mercy of the vicious gang, it followed that that gang dominated not only Generals Macready and Tudor, but the whole of Ireland and the policy of the British Cabinet. The military courts of justice and inquiry had, in the nature of things, to rely on the police for most of the evidence brought before them, hence the perjury which became rampant and which became the talk of Ireland and other parts of the world.

Revolutions cannot be suppressed by police methods, yet the police undertook this task, outside of Munster, in which latter place martial law was, very properly, in force.

It will be as well to turn now to my own experiences, as they throw strong light on events which were destroying the good name of England throughout the world.

We can pass over the details of the raising of the Auxiliary Division by me, and of the introduction of

"Black and Tans" into Ireland from England by General Tudor, in order to make good the enormous wastage in the ranks of the regular R.I.C. owing to men being murdered, wounded or resigning.

Let us take up the story from 21st November, 1920, the date on which many officers and two of my men were murdered one Sunday morning in Dublin before breakfast. Nobody can excuse the murders by Sinn Fein (save those who judge all things by ultimate success), nobody can condone our own.

The murders on 21st November, 1920, were aimed at chosen individuals who were in possession of secrets and names of witnesses and wanted men, and whose knowledge would be difficult to replace. A few other men, who inadvertently became evidence of the actual murders of 21st November, 1920, were killed or wounded.

Tealing, the only actual murderer caught, was captured by my men almost in my presence, and would have been shot out of hand, had I not stopped that unlawful act from being perpetrated, on the spot where he lay wounded. I did not and do not believe in people taking the law into their own hands, as, if such a thing is done, the result is mob law. The man was tried, found guilty and sentenced to death by a military court. He eventually escaped from a military prison.

In the afternoon the military ordered a combined operation between themselves, my men and the R.I.C. to take place, in order that the crowd at a hurley match at Croke Park should be rounded up and searched for arms. The idea was a stupid one, as it was obvious that those in a crowd of some ten thousand spectators who carried arms, when warned by megaphone to file out in a particular way, would drop their revolvers on the ground. This is what actually happened. But the worst part of the miserable performance was that some of the R.I.C. fired on the crowd over the fence from a lorry, without cause, and

killed several people, a coroner's jury, one of the last that was held, rightly returning a verdict of murder against the police. The officer in command of my party, Major E. L. Mills, late Middlesex Regiment, who had been with me in France and Lithuania, managed to get the firing stopped, and indignantly reported the matter to me on his return to barracks that evening. I immediately made him write out a report on the matter, which I forwarded to Dublin Castle at once. A statement made by the R.I.C. that someone in the crowd had fired first was, according to Major Mills and the military, untrue.

Next morning I left for Galway by car to inquire into the murder of a priest called Griffin, and to relieve a company commander of his command, as he was drinking too much. I found that Griffin had been murdered by my men, having been dragged out of his bed and shot, the body being buried in a bog and subsequently found by natives of the village.

On 23rd November, 1920, I returned to Dublin via Killaloe. At Killaloe I inspected a company, and heard that the Roman Catholic Bishop Fogarty was to be "done in" and that his body was to be dumped in the River Shannon, "in order not to have another Griffin case," which horrified me very much. I caused the Bishop to be warned, and believe he went "on the run" to Armagh, where he obtained shelter with Cardinal Archbishop Logue. Later, I set off for Dublin, intending to see General Tudor at once about Bishop Fogarty and Griffin. Unfortunately I was knocked out myself in an accident at Naas before I got to Dublin, being rendered unconscious for a long time, breaking an arm, scalping my head, and receiving a great physical shock. I was in the Curragh Military Hospital for a month, during which time the burning of Cork by my men took place, a diabolical murder of an ex-officer at Fermoy being also perpetrated by my men, on their way to Cork. In awarding damages

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to the widow, *against* the ratepayers, the 'Assize Judge alluded to this murder as a "dastardly act by Auxiliaries."

Before I came out of hospital at the Curragh another outrage was perpetrated by my men—this time in Dublin Castle itself, when two Sinn Fein suspects, detained in an Auxiliary guard-room, were murdered by the guard, the evidence produced before the official inquiry into the matter being subsequently faked.

I was away from duty nearly two months and went back to light duty in the middle of January, 1921, at the urgent request of General Tudor, instead of taking two months' sick leave to the south of France, as recommended by the R.A.M.C. doctors, but I attended daily at King George V Hospital for treatment till the middle of April, long after I had resigned. In persuading me that I should go back to light duty to assist him, General Tudor told me that "the show has gone to the dogs," and particularly asked me to deal with cases arising out of the Cork fires *at once*. I could not understand this urgency; later I knew. I dealt with some eight men from Cork, but not on account of the fires. The cases I dealt with were cases of theft, etc., by policemen in *County Cork*.

The whole of the flutter in the dove-cots of the Irish administration and of Downing Street, during the period beginning on 10th February and ending, after my resignation, on 19th February, 1921, was caused by the result of the findings of the Strickland report on the burning of part of Cork. Mr. Lloyd George had promised Parliament, in advance, to publish the report, but when he saw it he did not dare to do so, as it was a truly alarming document calculated to drive any Cabinet from office.

General Tudor was upset over the turn of events, which were not made easier by the action of General Macready on the one hand and myself on the other, over two totally different incidents relative to the maintenance of order in Ireland. On the Sunday on which I went down to Trim,

in King's County, to investigate a case of looting by many of my men, for which I placed five men under arrest and suspended twenty-one, General Macready placed one of my company commanders under arrest for a double murder committed by someone at Drumcondra, a suburb of Dublin. On the top of all this General Tudor had to go over to London almost at once, to advise the Cabinet about Cork, as there was to be a debate in the House during the week relative to the non-production of the promised Strickland report.

It is no exaggeration to say that General Tudor was so rattled, so anxious, so confused in thought and mind, and so much out of his depth as to be unable to appreciate the situation. On the Sunday and the Monday he agreed to my procedure regarding the Trim looting, insomuch as five men were to be tried and twenty-one "dispensed with" as being unsuitable to the force. Owing to lying and concoction of evidence, we felt that no court could convict the twenty-one men, yet they were obviously unsuitable for our requirements because their police oath bound them to "prevent and detect crime," which they were not doing.

As regards the five men to be tried, luckily I sent the evidence at once to the military authorities for safe keeping, as I did not trust the police to convict themselves. These men were eventually tried and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, varying from a year or so upwards. The remaining twenty-one immediately gave trouble before they left Dublin. One of them climbing over the barrack wall, went up to "The Castle" *and was listened to*. Threatening blackmail, he said if they were not reinstated he would expose Lloyd George, Bonar Law, the burning of Cork, the vicious gang and other things, and thus he left them. Within half an hour of the unorthodox intrusion of this subordinate into the inner councils of our administration I was rung up on the telephone from Dublin Castle and asked to reconsider the whole Trim

case, which, for obvious reasons, I refused to do, the matter being eventually left as I had settled it with General Tudor.

Little did I know at the time that, almost at the very moment when my cadet, who had jumped over the wall and had proceeded to Dublin Castle, there to hold a pistol at the head of the administration for the purpose of exercising unlawful pressure on the powers that be, the military authorities had arrested a member of the Dublin Castle Staff for using language calculated to interfere with justice in the Drumcondra case, which General Macready had taken in hand. This latter bomb-shell alarmed the authorities to such an extent as to virtually put an end to all considered judgments, plans or politics for the next few days.

I sent my twenty-one men off to England in precisely the same way as I had dealt with over fifty others from time to time in Ireland, as, of course, I did not care two-pence about Cabinets, political parties, Prime Ministers or placemen, if they interfered with my command. All these episodes caused General Tudor to write me the following letter from the mail-boat in desperation :

14th February.

DEAR CROZIER,—I think it will be best for you to keep these twenty-one T/C suspended till I come back. I want to discuss it with the Chief Secretary. He gets all the bother. My main point is that it is an unfortunate time to do anything that looks panicky. I think also these T/C's will have a distinct grievance if the platoon commanders and section leaders are acquitted. Tell these twenty-one they are suspended pending my return, or if you prefer it, keep them on by not completing their accounts till I come back.

Yours sincerely,

H. H. TUDOR.

The suggestion contained in this letter, which was called the "Panicky letter" in Dublin, that the twenty-one men, whose services had been dispensed with, would

have a distinct grievance if the five men were acquitted, only shows that the Chief of Police was not familiar with police routine. Even if they had been acquitted, the services of the five men would undoubtedly have been dispensed with, owing to "unsuitability for police work." They were, however, convicted and suffered imprisonment, loss of military rank and decorations.

The worst part of this letter was that it must have been known that it could not have been acted upon, even if I too had consented to be dragooned, as the men had left.

During the few days General Tudor was in London attending the Cabinet meeting, at which the attitude of the Government was being decided upon in regard to the debate on the burning of Cork, I was holding a conference of commanders in Dublin. During the first session of this conference I received a telegram in code from General Tudor in London, ordering me to suspend Lieutenant-Colonel Latimer (who was present) from duty, on account of his responsibility or acts of neglect in connection with the burning of Cork, which had taken place over two months previously. I did as I was ordered, but gave the unfortunate officer some sound advice, as an illegal act was, in my opinion, being committed. I knew my R.I.C. code, and with it this suspension, to meet the requirements of political expediency, did not comply. The story is a long one, into the details of which I need not enter save to say that, in my opinion, Lieutenant-Colonel Latimer had never done anything to deserve suspension, and that I, as his Commandant, was the man to know and decide; that Mr. Lloyd George had himself ordered the suspension from Downing Street, after having read through the Strickland report, in order that he might tell the House of Commons that something had been done; that the matter of the "punishment" of Lieutenant-Colonel Latimer was, quite wrongly, for a time taken out of the hands of the police and dealt with by Mr. Cope, a

civil servant, and that eventually nothing happened to Lieutenant-Colonel Latimer save that he was put to a lot of trouble. The whole thing was a put-up job at Downing Street, in order that the Cabinet might "save face."

I am not concerned with the fate of individuals or of the tricks of politicians in regard to awkward questions, in so far as they reflect on the individual. Intrigues do not interest me. But I am concerned when opportunism reflects on good government, and unfair administration results from a similar cause. It is therefore as well to examine this case of Colonel Latimer (for whom I hold no personal brief), as it affords food for reflection.

When General Tudor returned to Dublin from Downing Street he knew perfectly well he would be confronted with my resignation, and he was surprised when I tackled him about Colonel Latimer. At the outset I made it perfectly clear that I considered he had done an illegal act in suspending Latimer, as I was the authority concerned, yet I had not been allowed to see the evidence contained in the Strickland report against the Colonel. I saw a copy of it, after I raised the point, whereupon General Tudor explained as follows. I cannot, of course, use his exact words. The Prime Minister was reading over the Strickland report, line by line, in the presence of the General, and said that somebody must be held responsible for the burning of Cork. He then came to a part of the evidence in which Colonel Latimer said he was sleeping away from his company when the town was burning, or when the fires started. The Prime Minister is alleged to have said "that will do," or words to that effect. So the wire for suspension was sent to me, through Dublin Castle.

The subsequent accusation was, of course, that the Colonel had neglected his duty by sleeping away from his company in time of trouble, without leave. If he had done so the offence would have been a very serious one, but he hadn't. The local Divisional Commissioner R.I.C.

(under whom Colonel Latimer was serving) had an office in the City of Cork, where he slept. Colonel Latimer explained that he was requested by the Divisional Commissioner to sleep at the latter's headquarters so as to keep in touch, while the Colonel's second in command remained with the company in barracks on the top of the hill and in telephonic communication.

Before I left Dublin I accepted Colonel Latimer's explanation, but the case was taken out of my hands and illegally "dealt with" by the Permanent Civil Servants' Department. Of course, the moment the fuss in the House of Commons caused by the non-publication of the report was over, nothing mattered, but there was a further aspect which I did not like. Colonel Latimer was told by the Civil Service that if the Chief Secretary for Ireland "disliked the colour of the Colonel's moustache" (which happened to be red to fair in hue) he could remove him from the R.I.C., *so great was his power!* If that statement represents the considered point of view of one single civil servant to-day, then perhaps there is even more in what Lord Hewart says than meets the eye.

I resigned a few hours after going into Colonel Latimer's case, after which it was immediately set round that I had cleared off for an ulterior motive—a statement which was also made *and withdrawn* by Mrs. Charlotte Menzies, the "Black and Tan" political propagandist. Needless to say, I welcomed full inquiry, not only into my own conduct, but that of the Menzies, mother and son, and others.

In another respect Mr. Lloyd George was badly let down by his advisers, in regard to his speech of justification for the non-fulfilment of his promise to publish the Strickland report, as he said several men had been punished for their share in the burning. That statement was not correct. Nobody (save Latimer, who should not have been punished) was punished for the burning of Cork. What Mr. Lloyd George had evidently been told was that the

men I had dealt with for larceny, etc., in *County Cork* had been punished for the burning of Cork. Hence the anxiety to get me back to light duty to investigate these cases and report on them.

Things had got so bad during this week in February as to make it clear that the administration, based as it was on pure opportunism, could not last long.

Captain Roberson, a respected officer of the London Metropolitan Police, who is now a senior officer in that magnificent force and who had been an assistant Provost Marshal in France, had been lent to the Irish administration as secretary to General Tudor, and knows full well why things went from bad to worse. As a police officer of standing, experience and rectitude, he was, at times, almost in despair. He could be asked about the robbery of the Kilkenny mails by Auxiliaries (I got him back £29 and hold his receipt), the Drumcondra murders and other "incidents" too numerous to mention, and, as he is a Metropolitan Police officer, his word could be taken, no doubt, corroborated as it now can be by evidence from Ireland. Major Charles St. A. Wake is another ex-official whose testimony would be of undoubted value, when coupled with that of Sir John O'Connell, the Dublin solicitor who prepared the proper evidence in the Drumcondra case and sent it to members of the British Cabinet, before the trial. Major Conlan now, I believe, an Ulster police officer and late of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, whose correspondence bears very fully on part of this sordid subject, would be an interesting witness.

When my discharged Trim warriors arrived over in London, they proceeded to "play old Harry" with the pompous prudes in Parliament and the dying ducks in Downing Street, by categorically stating that unless they were sent back and reinstated at once they would have the Government out of office within a week; so *back they came!*

A man who was in London at the time of this

episode, and who played a very important part in the discomfiture of British bureaucracy, was one Wilfrid MacCartney, whose services had been dispensed with by me not long previously, from the Auxiliary Division, for excessive drinking and other idiotic performances which are generally to be found in its wake. MacCartney is now serving a sentence of ten years for espionage in this country, and it is peculiar that when his history was read out in court, after he had been found guilty of the offence for which he is now paying the price, no mention appears to have been made of his connection with the R.I.C. MacCartney, a fool, who became a rogue through drink, established himself in London, after he left me in a hurry, and "advised" dismissed men as to their best means of raising money. It may be truly said that on this occasion British official rectitude was defeated in the long bar of the Trocadero, thanks largely to MacCartney and his ilk.

The details of the return of these warriors cannot interest the reader, save where matters of public interest either clash with public policy, or are at direct variance with the considered statements of responsible minutes in the House of Commons.

When General Tudor returned to Dublin he sent for me, and immediately began to tell me that at the Cabinet conference, held to consider the Government statement on Cork, no mention had been made of the Drumcondra murder, for which he was thankful! But why should the Government mention such a thing? He then told me that he would resign if any Government servant was hanged for the Drumcondra murder, and asked me if I would, to which I replied, "You evidently do not understand me at all. What about these men the Government are sending back?" He said they were coming back, to which I replied, "Then I go," which appeared to upset him.

Before my commanders dispersed to their stations that day, at the conclusion of my conference, General Tudor

saw them and definitely asked them (some sixteen in all) if they thought the men should come back or not, to which they all replied, "No," the particular spokesmen being Brigadier-General Wood and Captain Webb.

Later, on the telephone, I was entreated to stay on, all kinds of financial and other inducements being offered me to do so, but I held out. Then the tone hardened up! If I did not consent to the return of the men, *my* services would be dispensed with! Unfortunately I was leaving next morning, which was a Friday, for South Wales, on ten days' leave, and was due on the Saturday to unveil a memorial to the 17th Welch Regiment at Newport. I accordingly made arrangements that no men should be taken back into Auxiliary quarters during my absence. As I received a private telegram on Saturday from a friend, just before I unveiled the memorial, telling me the men were back, I wrote the following letter to General Tudor, and tendered my resignation, from Malpas Court, where I was staying with Sir Leonard Llewellyn.

MALPAS COURT,

NEWPORT, MON.

19th February, 1921.

DEAR GENERAL,—The more I think over the matter, the more I am of opinion that your attitude in the "Trim incident" has made my position quite impossible in the Division, as I am all out to have the discipline unquestionable. I therefore propose to resign at the expiration of my leave. I still consider that theft on the part of policemen in the course of their duties is impossible, and I cannot honestly associate myself with a force in which such acts are condoned.

Yours sincerely,

F. P. CROZIER.

I had previously predicted to General Tudor that if he went back on his original decision to support me, he

would be confronted with mutiny and insubordination in the future. As a consequence, Colonel Latimer's company from Cork "kicked up rough," on account of the treatment handed out to their commander, and marched about with half-burnt corks in their caps instead of their proper badges, to signify that half Cork had been burnt.

It so happened that my Adjutant, Captain Macfie, was with me at Malpas. As I could not dress myself in uniform, not having recovered the use of my left arm, which had been broken on 23rd November, he came over for the day to help me dress. Apparently he was a rogue, although I was not aware of it at the time. Knowing that I had resigned that day (19th February), he wrote a letter to *The Times*, under the name of "Patria," in which he alluded to the resignation, at the same time transferring a large sum of "fines money" from the Adjutant's account to his own, while he sent in his resignation to Dublin. He apparently knew Dublin Castle would not dare to arrest him.

On arrival in London I found out that Macfie was living in a flat in Town, so, having been told of his embezzlement, I suggested to the Irish Office that he should be arrested, but nothing was done. The truth was that he knew so much about the activities of the Irish police that they dared not arrest him. After an adventurous career in the Near East, he was tried in France for embezzling a large sum of money belonging to a fashionable club on the Riviera, and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment, an account of which appeared in the English Press. As he held the French Croix de Guerre for valour, his sin was pardoned by the French Government.

The publication of this letter in *The Times* eventually led to the adjournment of the House, and a discussion which threw no light on the matter whatever. A very bad precedent had been created that day by the Speaker,

who fixed the date for the urgent debate some days off, thus giving "the inner gang" at Dublin Castle time to prepare a case. Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Asquith, Captain Redmond and others took part in the futile discussion, which was far removed from the real point at issue, and was chiefly remarkable for the venomous language used against me by Sir Hamar Greenwood, a Canadian, who was carrying out the duties of Chief Secretary for Ireland; and the use made by Mr. Bonar Law of two documents, the one signed by Brigadier-General Wood (who obtained my appointment and who, up to 19th February, had been my second in command), altering his previous opinion, and the other, signed by the *reinstated men*, saying there had been no condonation!! General Wood's letter was an absolute lie signed for profit. Both sets of documents came under the suspicious criticism of many, owing to the fact that all the signatories had profited out of my resignation in some way or other. It is unusual for the statements of accused persons to be taken at their face value in ordinary walks of life; perhaps in Parliament it is different.

I afterwards heard I was blamed in the smoking-room of the House of Commons for writing the "*Patria*" letter about which I knew nothing.

When I reached London from Wales I got in touch with Lieutenant-Colonel Archer-Shee, M.P., and acquainted him with the grave situation which had arisen. He went and saw Sir Hamar Greenwood and in the Chief Secretary's room accidentally met Sir Edward Carson and Sir James Craig who, he afterwards said, "spoke up for you" (meaning me). Of course they would speak up for me—had I not done a great deal of work for them? But the Colonel mistook my motive entirely. Apparently he thought I wanted something for myself! And then they accused me of "going to" Captain Redmond and Mr. Thomas! I saw Captain Redmond for a few minutes *just before the debate*, in company with Sir John Simon, so that

they should have correct facts, but I told them nothing that I did not also communicate to Mr. Lloyd George, Sir Edward Carson and Mr. Asquith. Mine was no party case, mine is no partisan mind. I have never spoken to Mr. Thomas, neither have I ever discussed the matter with him or written to him on the subject. I never asked for a debate or favours. As I was a free agent I did what I thought best, not for myself, but because of the mess the Government had got the country into.

On receipt of the following telegram from General Tudor,

“I accept your resignation from 19th February, and fear there must be some mistake, but wish to thank you for your services which have been exacting,”

I sent the following reply, by letter :

NAVAL AND MILITARY CLUB,
PICCADILLY, W.I.

23rd February, 1921.

DEAR TUDOR,—Thank you for your wire and appreciation of my services. There has been no mistake. The fact is that you are getting yourself into the most awful mess and I am not going into it with you. There is such a thing as being an accessory after the fact as well as before. But I want to make my position quite plain. *If* Drumcondra is faked, I take whatever steps I like to bring the whole of the humbug to the notice of the world. For once Macready seems to have done something. Empire must come before self!

Yours sincerely,
F. P. CROZIER.

My decision to resign had placed me in a very serious financial position, but I had fully weighed up the pros and cons. On the one hand I was faced with penury, and on the other dereliction of duty. While holding my appointment I was drawing £1,200 a year and allowances. I had a

wife and family to keep. This the authorities knew. They thought I would do anything for money. They were wrong.

Sir Hamar Greenwood had publicly expressed a general wish that I should go back to Dublin to assist in the "retrial" of the refractory cadets, notwithstanding that I had tried them once; and that a man in this country cannot be tried twice. I rather suspected that he thought I would be afraid to go back. I went back, taking advantage of my presence to continue my course of treatment at the military hospital.

I had not been in Dublin many days before I was rung up on the telephone at my hotel by Sir John Anderson, the present Under-Secretary for Home Affairs, who was then at Dublin Castle, and asked to go to the Judge-Advocate-General's Department of the Army, at Park Gate, to give evidence, as a summary of evidence was being taken. I went, and, to my amazement, was told by a senior officer in the Judge-Advocate-General's Department (1) that I had done the only thing possible in the first instance; (2) that the idea of court martialling the twenty-one cadets was all humbug and camouflage; (3) that the police were destroying the evidence; (4) that the five men I had secured for trial would be tried and found guilty, as the evidence which I had secured and sent to the military was clear; (5) that the twenty-one warriors would be eventually tried, and that all or nearly all would get off. All these predictions came true. So we had the edifying spectacle of Mr. Walter Guinness and Lord Winterton (both members of Mr. Baldwin's late Government) sticking up in the House of Commons for looters who stole from Irishwomen (they are both Irish), while the Judge-Advocate-General's Department characterized the whole thing as "political humbug." Even Mr. Ormsby-Gore (also a member of the Baldwin Government) rose in his wrath in the House when he heard the five worst men, whom I had locked up, had been let out "on parole" by my successor, and had

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promptly endeavoured to make an hotel-keeper cash a cheque at the point of the revolver, in order that they might escape! "Is it not time," he said, "that this force is placed under military discipline?" or words to that effect.

At Park Gate I was told by the Judge-Advocate to go back to my hotel and wait, as I was not wanted, and after waiting weeks and never being called, I was told I was not wanted at all! This episode shakes my confidence in the Home Office, where Sir John Anderson now is. Did he not know what was going on in Ireland? If not, why not?

It was stated in the House of Commons later that I had received a subpoena to attend the funny court martial on the twenty-one warriors, but this was not so. A subpoena had been issued for political purposes, but it had never been executed.

During my stay in Dublin on this court martial business three outstanding things happened. My friend Major Wake, an old disabled officer of many years' service, was sent about his business, his services being dispensed with by Dublin Castle ostensibly because he had been "irregularly enlisted" (which was not a fact), but really because, in the execution of his police duty, he had collected from the looted house near Trim some valuable evidence. He placed the whole matter in the hands of a solicitor.

At the same time my friend Lieutenant-Colonel Andrews came to me and told me he had overheard a conversation, which he was not supposed to hear, in Dublin Castle, in which it had been said that I was to be "dealt with," as I was "an enemy" (I was a Crown witness!). As it was easy to plant ammunition on a man and then shoot him out of hand in Ireland at that time, these statements were taken down, and I lodged them with a solicitor for use in the event of my death by violence. He also told me he had been ordered to take part in an ambush, dressed up as a "Shinner," with others, for the purpose of waylaying Sir Maurice and Lady Bonham-Carter and stealing their papers, as they were supposed to be "spying" for Lady Bonham-

Carter's father, Mr. Asquith. I caused Sir Maurice and his wife to be warned through Mr. Donagh O'Brien, at Limerick, who in turn communicated with their host, Lord Monteagle.

When I returned to England a few days later Mr. Asquith telegraphed to me, asking me to lunch at Sutton Courtenay to discuss this matter. There I met, in addition to my host and hostess, Sir John Simon, Captain Wedgwood Benn, Professor Gilbert Murray, Sir Maurice and Lady Bonham-Carter and Anthony Asquith, who struck me as a very nice-mannered boy. Sir Maurice rightly said that the most remarkable thing about this episode was that, even though it might have been a hoax (which it was not, further proof having been since advanced), everyone believed it, which showed the desperate state the country had been allowed to get into. Lieutenant-Colonel Andrews had resigned. He had been very upset about a double murder by the police on Killaloe Bridge, for which he was technically responsible, as commander of the police in the neighbourhood, and about which a dismissed man at Broadstairs had blackmailed him. Fifty pounds had been supplied to this man in April, 1921, with the knowledge of Dublin Castle.

When Sir John Simon asked me to arrange for Colonel Andrews to go to his chambers to sign a letter to *The Times* in regard to the Bonham-Carter affair, the Colonel at first declined to do so, but subsequently changed his mind, an appointment being arranged, which was never kept. Sir John telegraphed to me to Reading to say the Colonel had not put in an appearance, but when I spoke about it to my old Commanding Officer, he merely said he had thought better of it and was d——d if he was going to risk his life and be made a convenience of by any politician! "Andrews was a very brave man" were the words used about him by the late Major-General Sir Harold Ruggles-Brise, when discussing this matter later with me at the Officers' Association.

I do not suppose many people understood Colonel Andrews, as his methods were sometimes quite original, but he *did* capture his objectives. A story he used to tell against himself was typical of the man. As he was a firm believer in immediate recognition of valour and military virtue, he usually carried a few spare chevrons about with him in his pockets, in order that he could confer unpaid promotion on to those worthy of advancement. One day, when inspecting his battalion, he made a very clean, smart young soldier a lance-corporal on the spot on account of his frontal appearance, and a few seconds afterwards "demoted" the same man, without at the time knowing it, on being told he was an unpaid lance-corporal, because of the slovenly manner in which his pack was set up!

Mr. Asquith made a great impression on my mind. It was a Sunday. He had been playing golf and looked fit and well in his country clothes. We sat at small tables during lunch, at mine being Mr. Asquith, Sir John Simon and Captain Wedgwood Benn. As I looked at the late Prime Minister who had brought the Empire into the World War, I could not help thinking what a lot of consummate liars there must be in the world. But what struck me most of all about him was the way in which he played with his small grandchildren after lunch, with that ease of manner and unaffected naturalness which only stamp the great. Lord Roberts had the same gift with children.

Mrs. Asquith walked me up and down the lawn after lunch, before showing me her sanctum at the riverside, an old converted barn. "They tell me," she said, "that you are as much a murderer as any of them, only you like things done in an orderly manner, and at Trim they were disorderly!" "Who's they?" I answered, but she wouldn't say. Of course I had to defend myself against this accusation. Luckily, after Balbriggan had been partly burnt in 1920, by regular R.I.C., for which my men had been unjustly blamed by Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice,

in the *Daily News*, I had had some correspondence with the General, during which we had come to the conclusion that our ideas were not far removed as regards unofficial reprisals. So I referred Mrs. Asquith to Sir Frederick, who, after my resignation, had written in the *Daily News* that it was "inevitable." She knew all about it.

After seeing Mr. Asquith I lunched *tête-à-tête* with Lord Buckmaster, who was a member of the Peace with Ireland Council, and discussed certain probable action which might be taken. The ex-Lord Chancellor struck me instantly as being the right man for England, the embodiment of wisdom and humility, combined with strength.

Before leaving Ireland I saw the unfortunate Major Bruce, who, having been tried by court martial in December, 1920, for robbing a creamery, had been sent to prison. He had expressed a wish to see me, as he was very ill. Bruce, who had done extremely well in the war, had lost an arm and had been awarded a D.S.O. and M.C. He had been appointed to be a platoon commander by the late Lieutenant-Colonel Kirkwood at Kilkenny. I had occasion to warn him several times about his behaviour to respectable Irish people, and eventually had to dismiss him for striking an Irishman without provocation. Returning to Ireland, he started a robber gang of his own in the county, using a police motor-car for the purpose, on hearing which I had him arrested.

The Drumcondra trial turned out as I had expected. Of course if the wrong man is tried or if the evidence is not adequate on which to convict, no court can convict, but although an acquittal may be useful in some directions, it did not help a country in the state in which Ireland was at the time.

Before my resignation I had been boarded by a R.I.C. Medical Board, which had been appointed for the purpose of awarding compensation for my injuries received in an accident while on duty on 23rd November, 1921. Sir

William Wheeler, the famous Irish surgeon who had attended me, had assessed the damage at £1,500, and I accordingly looked forward to receiving that amount in due course. It had been suggested at "The Castle" that I should apply to the courts for compensation, under the Malicious Injuries Act, and swear that my injuries had been caused by Sinn Feiners, the money being, in that case, paid by the ratepayers. This was sometimes done in Ireland. I know one ex-cadet who received over £1,000 from the rates for shooting himself accidentally, and another who received £400 for nothing at all. On the other hand, the women who were robbed at Trim received compensation from the rates by order of a civil court for what my men did. Be it remembered that these men were "stuck up for" in the House by Mr. Guinness.

While Judge Bodkin, at Cork, had been protesting from the Bench relative to the "Black and Tan" outrages, and while the widow of the Mayor of Limerick had been protesting to Mr. Lloyd George about the murder of her husband by Auxiliaries, in his own house in the dead of night (she has written an instructive pamphlet on the matter), the Sinn Feiners were intensifying their diabolical doings by murdering more policemen and soldiers. Mr. Blake of the R.I.C. (he had once been my orderly, and I had recommended him for his R.I.C. appointment) and his young wife, and that dashing young cavalry soldier, Cornwallis, were murdered at a tennis-party in cold blood. This last atrocity made my blood boil to such an extent that I vowed that something would have to be done, and that I would have to help to do it, as loyalists should never have been exposed to such danger.

It was now either a case of sufficient *troops* (not police) and martial law everywhere (which many of us had said was necessary at the start), or a truce and settlement. I hoped the Government would take the former course and settle later, as I was well aware of Napoleon's phrase,

“ You can do anything with a bayonet except sit on it,” but it had to be one thing or the other.

According to Mr. Ronald McNeill, at one time Financial Secretary to the Treasury, the British taxpayers paid approximately £4,000,000 owing to *damage* done in Ireland in 1920-21 by the Crown Forces. Of this sum the loss which may be attributable to the action of the British Army was negligible, as it was, as it always is, well behaved. Moreover, in this £4,000,000 is included the amount of damage done to Cork City, by fire, etc., for which the police were admittedly responsible in the first instance.

It was because I considered that these things should not be, and because, when I tried to stop them from happening I was prevented from so doing, that I declined to command the Auxiliary Division any longer, and was forced to face the world, at a few seconds' notice, with a family to keep and educate, without a bean in my pocket and only my orders and decorations to pawn.

I asked Mr. William Graham, M.P. (a former Financial Secretary), to obtain certain facts to support my statements, and to him I tender my thanks. The following letter from Mr. McNeill bears out my contention in regard to the responsibility in this grave matter.

In addition, of course, the Government was responsible for the loss of many valuable British lives which can never be replaced.

TREASURY CHAMBERS,

WHITEHALL, S.W.

22nd February, 1927.

DEAR GRAHAM,—In reply to your letter of the 28th January, the answers to the two Irish questions which you ask me to supply, for the information of a correspondent, are as follows:

1. “ The amount of money paid by Great Britain as our portion of the damage done in Ireland in 1920-21 by

Crown Forces." Exact figures are not available, because, as you know, in the autumn of 1924 the British Government agreed to pay the sum of £900,000 to the Irish Free State in settlement of all outstanding claims in relation to property in the Irish Free State; and it is not possible to state how much of that sum was paid in respect of damage done by Crown Forces in 1920-21, and how much was on account of other claims, such as the lawful occupation and use of property under emergency powers. An approximate figure, however, would be £4,000,000, to cover all damage attributable to Crown Forces, and inclusive of costs and interest for the period between date of damage and date of payment of compensation.

2. "The amount paid by Great Britain for the damage done by fire, etc., to Cork City in December, 1920." If your correspondent will refer to paragraph 5 (d) and (e) of the "Heads of Working Arrangements" (Cmd. 1911 of 1923), he will see that the arrangement between the two Governments was that the Free State Government should discharge all awards made by the Compensation (Ireland) Commission in full, and should subsequently be repaid by the British Government such a proportion of the total amount so paid as might be agreed between the two Governments. It was agreed that, for the purpose of arriving at this proportion, the apportionment of liability for any *particular* acts of damage should be left to the Commission themselves, and that they should only report to the two Governments the proportion of the *total* damage that should be borne by the British Government and the Irish Free State Government respectively. It is not, therefore, possible to say what is the amount paid by Great Britain for the damage done in Cork City on the occasion to which your correspondent refers; although he will, of course, understand that the British share of liability for that damage (assuming that the Commission were satisfied that it was done by British Forces) is included in the

total sum of £4,000,000 given in the answer to his first question.

Yours sincerely,

RONALD McNEILL.

RT. HON. W. GRAHAM, M.P.

Before leaving Dublin I had got into touch with leaders of public opinion in Ireland, among them the Chairman of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce, a lifelong Unionist, Mr. J. C. Meredith, K.C. (now a Free State Judge), and then a moderate Sinn Feiner, Professor Culverwell of Trinity College, Dublin, a Unionist, Archbishop Bernard (whose cousin, Colonel Bernard, had served in the Ulster Division and was killed), and others. While many of these men differed on some points, they all agreed on one, namely, that the position in Ireland was intolerable, and that the British Government must either get out or govern. As Sir Horace Plunkett favoured Dominion Home Rule, after I had been given definitely to understand by the Lord-Lieutenant (Lord French) that the Government had no intention of resorting to full martial law throughout Ireland, I decided to join the Dominion League which had been set up for securing Dominion Rule.

We drew up proposed truce terms and sent them "both ways" to Downing Street and De Valera, via Mr. J. C. Meredith and Sir Horace Plunkett.

At the same time as our effort was going on Lord Derby, disguised in a pair of horn spectacles as "Mr. Edwards," had, too, been busy in Dublin. Doubtless his report had much to do with the truce. Lord Derby found out in a few hours what any politician could have done at any time during the previous six months.

Apropos of Lord Derby's disguised visit to Ireland, an amusing story of his visit to Cardinal Logue at Armagh is told, for the truth of which I cannot vouch. "Mr. Edwards" was walking in the garden at the palace

with the Archbishop's Chaplain, who, despite the fact that he knew full well who he was, invariably addressed His Lordship as "Mr. Edwards" and pretended that he knew him not. The conversation had turned on apples, and as they walked the Reverend Father suddenly stopped and, picking up an apple, said, without a trace of a smile on his face, but with a slight twinkle in his eye, "And this is a famous apple, 'Mr. Edwards,' rosy, round, juicy, and prolific; it only prospers on rich soil and does particularly well in Ireland; they call it the Derby, 'Mr. Edwards'!"

After my arrival in England I signed a long statement which had been drawn up by my solicitor, Sir John O'Connell, for the use of the Peace with Ireland Council. Sir John Simon approached Sir John O'Connell in order to obtain the use of this document in the House of Commons during a debate, but the latter refused to let him use it for that purpose, as he considered it would prejudice the matter of my grant of compensation for injuries which he had been negotiating with Mr. Cope. I eventually sent a copy of this document to General Sir Hubert Gough for his perusal and remarks, whereupon he asked me if he might send it to Major-General Sir John Davidson, M.P., "who used to be at G.H.Q., a Conservative and therefore the best to convince." I gave permission for this use to be made of the document, and received it back from Sir Hubert with an expression of regret that it was not available for the public. This remark caused me to definitely decide to publish in conjunction with the Peace with Ireland Council.

Extracts from my narrative were published on 24th May (Empire day, a most suitable day, deliberately chosen) and succeeding days in the *Daily News*. On the morning of the first day of publication I saw Mr. Asquith at his house in London, and the Chief Coalition Whip, Lieutenant-Colonel Leslie Wilson, M.P. (now Governor of

Bombay), at the Treasury, the latter appointment having been arranged by my mother. I gave Colonel Wilson a full account of the chaos to which Ireland had been reduced owing to stupid, weak and misdirected government. His chief complaint was that I had published instead of going quietly to him about the business, but I told him that that method had failed, as literally hundreds of people had been warning the Government, including that great Irish landlord, the O'Connor Don, and that no notice had been taken of well-intended, helpful advice.

I know that prior to publication a copy of my signed statement had found its way to Buckingham Palace.

On the afternoon of 24th May, 1921, Mr. T. P. O'Connor moved the adjournment of the House of Commons without success, in order to call attention to my accusations, whereupon an entirely new phase in the game was opened.

Mr. Walter Guinness, M.P., immediately made an attack on me in the House of Commons, a place protected by privilege, and accused me of having been "deprived of my commission." For some days or weeks, sometimes supported by Lord Winterton, M.P., who had gone over to Dublin at Easter-time with him where they were said to have consorted with certain of the police, he continued to attack me violently in the House of Commons. He called for my record of service, which was published in the House of Commons by the War Minister, Sir Laming Worthington-Evans, and, according to *Hansard*, sought to interfere with military administration and control, for which the soldiers would not stand. Exactly why he did this he alone can say. I, on the other hand, in order to help the Government, which was obviously in a state of great embarrassment, offered to go back to Dublin, and submit to arrest by General Macready, after which I could have been tried by court martial, under the Restoration of Order Act, for using language calculated to

bring the Crown Forces (not the 'Army) into disrepute. Needless to say, this was the last thing in the world they desired to do, as they knew I could not only prove my case, but prove that I had actually acted in the best interests of the Empire.

It is, of course, now admitted that we were right in our contentions, so much so, in fact, that Ministers and others who were responsible for the Government of the country in those days do not like talking about it. I do not hold with the idea of passing this matter over, as we must all learn our Imperial lessons, and however much we may desire to let them down lightly, in consideration of the wise way in which they subsequently handled the affairs of the nation, in the days leading up to, during and after the truce, the mistakes of misgovernment must be taken to heart and digested, when they do occur, in order that they may be avoided. The Empire recognizes that to Lord Birkenhead and Sir Austen Chamberlain she owes a great debt of gratitude, while upon Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Churchill she naturally looks through rather different eyes, as they were Home Rulers once. But to all four she says, "Thank God you came from different party camps to make a settlement on non-party lines."

I have digressed from the Guinness dog-fight to statesmanship, but I hope not in vain, as the former was a very personal, petty matter, while the latter is Big British Business. Contrasts are sometimes helpful.

The two unfortunate men who originally reported the Trim looting to me and who remained solid in their evidence for the Crown, which convicted those whom I had said were guilty and could be so proved, came over to see me in 1921, as they had been disgracefully treated by their superiors and comrades after the trials. To begin with they had been under protection from some of their comrades for over three months pending the trials, and after they had given their evidence, were ordered to join

a company in Munster, some of the members of which said they would shoot them if they joined. They left Dublin amidst a volley of stones, to ask help, among others, from Brigadier-General G. K. Cockerill, M.P., an old soldier who has since been knighted. They received no aid. I was not at all pleased with the outlook of the general run of regular soldiers in the House of Commons at the time. They did not appear to know or understand that the Army was being badly let down by the police.

About three years later I had occasion to write to General Cockerill about these two men, when he replied that he had "some sort of recollection" of two men going to him with some sort of "grievance." Grievance, forsooth! In the Army it is called by a different name. What would the General say if some of his men who had given evidence before him had been stoned by their comrades after leaving his orderly-room and then thrown out of barracks and allowed to starve? I deprecate that sort of superior attitude to subordinates. And then Lieutenant-Colonel Martin Archer-Shee, M.P. (who has also since been knighted), entirely failed to grasp the situation, while Brigadier-General Tom Hickman also said I had "gone to Redmond and Thomas." All these men failed to understand that if their opponents saw an anonymous letter in *The Times* about a senior police officer, out of which party capital could be made, they would use it, just as they would have done themselves, had the boot been on the other leg. I wrote to General Hickman, who had been most kind to me on several occasions, both in France and at his home in Staffordshire, and received the following reply:

"27th July, 1921.

"MY DEAR CROZIER,—Thanks for your letter. I quite understand what you say, and can only remark that you would have been wiser, in the first instance, had you brought your case to me, when I would have enlisted the good offices of Carson and James Craig to put pressure

on Greenwood, which afterwards they both said they would have been glad to do for me, but they were naturally put out when they found that Redmond and Thomas had taken up the case, to score a point against the Government and make political capital out of it instead of doing you any good."

This letter is tantamount to an admission that Lords Carson and Craigavon and General Hickman knew I was right. I do not know what Lord Carson or Lord Craigavon expected me to do under the circumstances. To me my only possible path—that of resignation—appeared clear, as appeal I had none. As regards my own personal affairs this letter is of no interest, but from the public point of view it is of considerable importance. It is bad that the fate of the affairs of the country (for this is what this remarkable letter points to) should rest on the whim of party leaders. I have little doubt in my mind that had I "gone to" Lord Craigavon and "split" on my Chief, I could have assumed complete police control in Ireland, and in all probability have even wangled myself into some such position as "Commissioner-Extraordinary for the suppression of the Irish insurrection," such was Lord Craigavon's faith in me for effort of that kind, as often demonstrated in his letters to me!! That I did not take that line of action is no credit to me. It simply was not in me to do so, purely because, in the Army, as a rule, such things are not done. I have, alas! learnt since 1921 that a great deal goes on in bureaucratic circles which serves the Empire no good purpose, but the men who do these things for their own ends, with their eyes on "the main chance," are few in number, and could easily be suppressed if the will to do so existed.

The worst kind of slander to which anybody can be subjected is that which goes on *sub rosa* and is therefore cowardly. My enemies adopted this line of attack, and

while Mr. Guinness was openly insinuating on the floor of the House of Commons that I was a blackguard, the smoking-rooms, boudoirs and other gossip chambers of London were being polluted with filthy lies regarding my past history by propaganda agents of the Irish administration. At this time Sir Hamar Greenwood invariably adopted a truculent bullying attitude towards me in the House of Commons, which drew from Lord Henry Cavendish-Bentinck the remark that he (Greenwood) was denying to me the consideration he was affording to my one-time subordinates. I, too, was an ex-officer.

I defy any man, however strong he may be, to stand up alone and unaided for long against the unscrupulous attacks of the Propaganda Department of his own country, levelled at him because he refuses to support their activities. I was no exception to the rule. But I was fortunate. At the time when the filthy propagandic literature and conversation was being turned out by highly paid servants of the Crown against me, I married again and thus acquired a gracious Irish partner to help me defeat the enemy. To her I owe all, and to her Governmentally paid propagandists owe their defeat, a fact known full well by the late Prime Minister's Private Secretary, Sir Ronald Waterhouse.

When I was staying with my old Division Commander, Major-General Sir John Ponsonby, in 1922, he told me he had refuted the calumnies against me, uttered by people in London society, during the season of 1921, while Sir William Peyton told me the same thing in the same year, on his return from India.

In June, 1921, Mrs. Asquith wrote to me and asked me if I would care to go to a political meeting in Westminster, which was being held in support of the good name of the "Black and Tans" by the Diehard reactionary element in the Coalition. As I was sick myself at the time (it took me two years to get rid of continuous headaches due to

the accident at Naas, from which I still suffer), and sick to death of the "Black and Tans" and everything to do with them, and as I was resting in the country, I declined her offer. Mrs. Asquith meant well, but it would have, I think, been kinder to have been more candid. From a book which was written some years later and which has since been withdrawn, it appears that a sort of political Diehard propagandist called Charlotte Menzies had seen Mrs. Asquith, and had reviled me much to her at that time. This meeting was, in fact, held to "down me" in secret. No doubt, had I gone to it, as Mrs. Asquith clearly intended I should, I should have sent a good many notorious people for a rest cure in jail, but I did not know the depths to which some had stooped.

The Irish Truce, with which a conversation between Mr. Cope and Lord Londonderry in County Down, at the time of the opening of the Parliament of Northern Ireland, is said to have had much to do, brought all this disreputable propaganda to an end for the time being, the secret efforts being diverted from the bolstering up of the "Black and Tans" and the reviling of me, to the frustration of the King's desires that people in Ireland should "forbear, forgive, and forget."

The day before the truce came into force Mr. J. C. Meredith, K.C., sent a cryptic telegram to my wife, asking me to go over to Dublin at once. I travelled over by the Irish mail-train. In the same train, by the irony of fate, travelled Generals Macready and Tudor and some henchmen. Some of these men gave me a look on the platform before starting which can only be described as diabolical. So apparent was the hostile attitude of these strange men that my wife and sister-in-law, who mistook them for Sinn Féin gunmen, arranged with the guard of the train that they should be placed under observation. On reaching Holyhead Town, not wishing to be "accidentally pushed into the sea" at the pier, I got out of the train and walked

on to the North Wall boat in peace and quiet, while the Dublin Castle party proceeded to the mail-boat!!

The two Generals had been to Downing Street to receive their surrender orders from the representatives of the people of England, whose voice had, at last, become vocal. They did not like it, and I am not surprised. During the Irish Rebellion in 1798 General Abercrombie, the British Commander-in-Chief, resigned (subsequently being reviled by his fellow-countrymen in Parliament for so doing), because he would not tolerate Yeomanry excesses in Ireland which were thought lightly of in England. He was killed in action in Egypt a little later, yet the Irish Rebellion was suppressed. Abercrombie was right. In 1921 the policy of drift or "tongue-in-check," call it which you like, had brought its own reward.

The Irish people had always had the greatest respect for the British Army in Ireland, even in the most troublesome times. The general regret among all classes at the death, by murder, of young Cornwallis in Galway was sincere, as he was a soldier and an English gentleman. So it came about that the rebel leaders refused to allow the police representatives to take part in the truce conference at the Mansion House in Dublin, which only lasted a few minutes, the broad principles having been agreed in advance in Downing Street. I know the police said *they* refused to have anything to do with it. They never should have been "politicalized."

The attitude of the Irish towards the British Army has never changed, as is well illustrated by the following letter which appeared in a recent issue of the *Morning Post*.

LOYALTY IN THE FREE STATE
REGARD FOR THE SOLDIERS OF THE KING
(*To the Editor of the "Morning Post"*)

SIR,—I should like you to publish the following extract from a letter from a resident of the Irish Free State, as

showing the intense loyalty, which nothing can suppress, and also indicating the good feeling which continues for the Regular Forces of the Crown, which for many generations were identified with the common and happy life of Ireland :

“ The last day of the Show (Dublin Horse Show) was quite exciting, when the finals of the military jumping for the Aga Khan's Cup were jumped. There is always quite a ceremony when the competing teams enter the arena. They ride around to the Governor-General's box, while the band plays the National Anthem of each country. First came the Belgians, then the French, next the English, and the Irish last.

“ When the English appeared you never heard such cheering and clapping, an absolute roar of sound, and when the band played ‘ God Save the King ’ everyone burst into singing, and we all did our best to show our sentiments. Pent-up feelings were let loose. It must have surprised some of the English visitors, or rather mystified them. When the Free State team came in there was shouting too, but their National Anthem fell quite flat, as nobody knew it.”

On a recent visit to the south of Ireland I was greatly struck with the spirit of affection shown and high regard expressed by all classes of Irish people for the Regular Forces of the Crown stationed in Ireland in bygone days, but not for the “ Black and Tans.”

J. MOORE,
Major-General.

16 FROGNAL LANE,
HAMPSTEAD, N.W.

After breakfast on Truce Day, 1921, Mr. Meredith took me to the Mansion House, where I saw Mr. De Valera and Erskine Childers. My reason for being introduced to De

Valera (I knew Childers slightly during the war, when he was in the Royal Naval Air Service) was to impress upon him that two blacks do not make a white, and that these were no good, during the subsequent conference of settlement, which was bound to be protracted, or General Macready's Truce Meeting, which was bound to be of short duration, in reviling the "Black and Tans," as the Sinn Feiners were worse, as they had begun the murder stunt, which eventually resolved itself into an ever-increasing vicious circle. My other point was that there could never be any question of Ireland being outside the British Empire, as geography would not allow of such a happening. Free she certainly could be, and strong, on account of the strength of the Empire—"The stronger because more free." I studied De Valera very closely during this conversation, and came to the conclusion that his dogmatic mind would probably wreck Ireland. He was at great pains to explain to me why "spies" were "executed" by the Irish Republican Army. "We had no prisons to put them in," he said, "and their talk was a great menace to our undertaking." All my relations in Ireland had ceased to talk years before. It didn't pay.

I saw a good bit of both Childers and his wife that day, and came to the conclusion that they were both absolutely sincere, and that the husband would go to any lengths to uphold his outlook. Childers might have been an English country gentleman, roaming about his estate in tweeds, when I saw him, instead of a stiff, unbending rebel. The sketches on the walls of his study breathed the air of the sea, for he loved his yacht. Having written the "Riddle of the Sands," he was himself a riddle. People who saw him executed in my old barracks in Dublin, up against a stop butt I had made, said he was absolutely without fear as he walked to his death. He was, I believe, a victim of the never compromise mentality. He had plunged with others for the absolutely unattainable—a republic—and he

could take nothing less. He did not understand that an Irishman at a fair likes to ask high and expects a low offer in return, whereupon both parties can approach each other and meet in the middle. So it was with the Irish political offer. They asked for a republic and got a dominion. Poor Childers! I should have been tempted to lock him up instead of shooting him, although I see the point that Childers no more is a menace removed.

I saw the last Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in Ireland walking up the Mansion House steps in Dublin, to meet the rebel leader, De Valera, on an equality. I knew the spot well. Once upon a time I used to play truant from school in the neighbourhood, when I was a very small boy. Never did I think I should ever see such a sight as I saw on that July morning, when the British soldier went forward to play a part loathed by all soldiers—surrender—not to superior forces, but on account of almost unaccountable stupidity of action.

The tragedy of the Irish Truce could probably be traced to a multitude of causes by a multitude of people, each making out quite a good argument, in accordance with his or her point of view, but I write of actual experiences and concrete facts with which I am familiar and in which I played an active part, rather than in abstract argument, which is never so convincing.

The greater cause of the failure was perhaps that the Cabinet never knew what was going on in Ireland. A brief example will suffice to explain. Mr. Churchill once wrote in a magazine that Mike Collins, the Irish rebel, had told him at his (Mr. Churchill's) house in London in 1921 that £1,000 had been offered for the head of Collins, dead or alive, and that subsequently Mr. Churchill had been told there was no truth in the statement. I am not interested in Mike Collins, let alone his head. I missed him once at Cahir by five minutes in 1920 and again by a few minutes at Dundrum in 1921, but I do know that £1,000 was offered

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for him, dead or alive. Posters and photographs were printed to that effect. Moreover I obtained a ruling as to whether policemen were eligible for this reward, seeing that they were only doing their duty in capturing the criminal, and it was decided that they were. One of my police officers actually arrested a Dublin business man in a restaurant in mistake for Collins, and, locking him up, claimed the reward, while another man was killed under somewhat similar circumstances, the reward also being claimed. The "get rich quick" policy which surrounded this offer of reward caused us considerable trouble, "if you do not at first succeed, try, try again," being in many minds.

General Tudor was the wrong man for the job which he undertook, in other words he was too nice a man, too good a sort, originally, to have to cope with the difficulties he encountered. General Tudor had met Mr. Winston Churchill at the 9th Divisional dinner, the former having commanded the Division, the latter having commanded a battalion in it. It was in that atmosphere of war comradeship that the post in Ireland was mentioned to the General by Mr. Churchill.

The General was a good sportsman, a champion boxer, a famous amateur jockey, and, in the war, a first-rate soldier, but in Ireland he got tied into knots. He had to associate with people not of his jart; one expects the British Empire to be run by gentlemen, and Ireland, in those days, certainly expected to be ruled on gentlemanly—not genteel—lines.

There grew up in Ireland a certain coterie which threw out tendrils in many directions and which was connected with Parliament, the aristocracy, London society, people in America and the public services. This coterie eventually dominated General Tudor and endeavoured to dominate me. Eventually there came the inevitable and fatal hour when the General had to choose his path. As I see it, he chose the wrong one and went down with his ship in less than five months, like a sea captain on the bridge valiantly

sinking with a shipload of lunatics; while I disappeared from the sea of Irish trouble, in so far as the Tudor ship was concerned, of my own accord.

The reader will rightly ask why it was that such a state of affairs should have come to exist. The answer can be told in two words—"Personal gain." Certain people whose interests were bound up with the Union used this local coterie in Ireland to prevent the 1920 Act for the "better" Government of Ireland from coming into force completely. As the alternative to the meeting of a Sinn Fein Parliament in 1921, under the Act, was a system of Crown Colony Government, certain people decided that the Southern Parliament should never meet, as Crown Colony Government would only be another name for British Government and might eventually, by the passage of time and a change of Government at Westminster, give place to the normality of Union. As this suited the coterie in Ireland very well, Crown Colony Government meaning to them a continuation of their jobs and even the acquisition of better posts, the "Robot" régime at Dublin Castle became definitely reactionary in type and Diehard in partisan colour. The deal between the Diehards and the police was complete. That it failed is, I think, entirely due to the sagacity and insight of Sir Alfred Cope, the Assistant Under-Secretary for Ireland, at Dublin Castle, who, summing the matter up, refused to allow his political chiefs to be hoodwinked and deceived any longer (I have seen minutes to that effect), and, through his personality, left a good mark for England on the affairs of his time, which few other permanent civil servants have ever done.

I paid a brief visit to Dublin at the New Year of 1922, and heard the debates in the Dail for and against the ratification, during which time I dined with Colonel Sir Henry Grattan-Bellew at the Kildare Street Club. I well remember one remark made by Sir Henry in answer to a question from me. "I don't mind," he said, "whether

they accept or reject the Treaty as long as they do not split and ruin Ireland." We know they did split and that a great deal of damage was done to Ireland by Irishmen. Tragic though this was, it was a new experience for Ireland, as, ever since the days of Strongbow, a popular cry had been raised in Ireland, with great success, that it was only Englishmen who were out to damage the Emerald Isle.

Save for the dastardly murder of Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson in London by two Sinn Fein ex-service men, the Irish question was being gradually forgotten by Englishmen, who were, on the whole, thankful for the settlement. This tragedy, alas! naturally aroused intense indignation. I made the cause of the murder known to Mr. Lloyd George within a few days of the murder. One of the reasons for the perpetration of the foul crime cannot in any way condone the circumstances of such an atrocity, but does explain a great deal. A publican in Belfast and several members of his family had been murdered in their house during curfew hours. Certain evidence pointed to the fact that possibly the police had committed the murder. A reward had been offered by the Government of Northern Ireland for information leading to the arrest of the murderers, but nothing had happened, despite the fact that certain evidence was supposed to have been sent in. The result of this was that Sir Henry Wilson was killed, because it was quite wrongly assumed that he had, as a quasi-political policeman (he had been asked to organize the defences of Ulster), neglected his duty. It was a return of the old vicious circle which we all hoped had died in 1921. In this case the "bag" of the circle of vice had been a Belfast publican and several of his sons, a British Field-Marshal and two ex-service men, who were justly hanged in London. The murder of the great soldier had a most sobering effect on Irish mentality and the mentality of the north of Ireland.

I decided to stand for Parliament at the General Election

of 1923, in order to call attention to the defects of British bureaucracy. I, with others, feared that unless the drawing-room, boudoir and smoking-room electors of the "all's well" class were taught the lesson of their lives, the same kind of Government which had put our country in the wrong across the Irish Channel would extend to this country, the inevitable result of which would be trouble. I fought the election, backed by Labour, and, considering I was new to the constituency, did quite well. I never expected to be returned, but I hoped to keep out the element which had contributed to the mismanagement of Irish affairs, and I hoped that the Labour Party (as representing the very best elements of the late British armies which had secured us our victory in the field) would be returned for a spell of experience in the difficulties of Government. I realized that the flowing tide cannot be dammed by those who can only damn, and that if such a risky undertaking is attempted the results are likely to be disastrous to the Empire. A few months' experience of politics, however, convinced me that for those whose activities are only devoted to the greater issues, such as world peace, reduction of taxation, the control of bureaucracy, the curbing of the power of the liquor trade, the housing of the working classes, Empire migration, unemployment and the like, as against conservation of personal resources, allegiance or "faithfulness" to a particular political party is impossible. So I cease to be a politician, my slogan from that time forward being "My country right," instead of the older and misleading cry "My country right or wrong."

In standing for Parliament in the interests of the men I had helped to lead in France, I undoubtedly made a mistake, as I am not a strict party man—I'm for the "underdog." I probably understand the hardships of the "underdog" more than some of my class (I dislike the word immensely), and I believe the rank and file of the British armies to have been thoroughly let down after the war. I cannot

understand the mentality which permits luxury and poverty to run hand in hand after the war, seeing that people in both categories became peculiarly "mated" under shell-fire when their skins were in danger. The mistake I made was to confuse principle with practice, and, having found out my mistake I had perforce to drop politics altogether, at any rate for the time being, as, alas! I found much similarity in the substrata of all parties.

Politics itself is, I think, not necessarily a dirty game; it is the players that sometimes make it so. Football is clean, but occasionally a player plays foul, and is ordered off the ground for so doing. In the game of politics it is not only to individuals that the stigma of foul play is sometimes attached, as whole sides sometimes indulge in the ignominious pastime, there being no umpire to blow the whistle.

The stupidity of Mayfair, Downing Street, Blackpool and Margate holding high revel, as if there was no "battle" on in our country, while the unemployed number over a million, astounds me greatly, for as long as that sort of thing goes on I know the national emergency is not understood by those whose duty it is to understand and lead.

In the midst of all this, the rank and file of the services who fought in the war and "won" it are now engaged in the most desperate battle of their lives, the fight for family bread. It makes my blood boil to think that directly the German menace was over many of the well-to-do deserted their men and began behaving as if *they* alone had won the war, in full knowledge that their material interests had been saved, and often increased, by these very men. A leader is necessary. A man is required. God send us a man who will "forbid, frustrate and fulfil."

It is nonsense to say nothing can be done. Those who use this argument usually grouse at the dole and leave the matter there.

I would confiscate no property, as to confiscate is unBritish, but for the next twenty years or so, until the

situation improved, I would "borrow" at reasonable interest from those who have. I would create work, just as the life and soul of every man of military age was "claimed" for the country (and rightly so) in its hour of danger. Why not creation on Imperial lines, with foresight for migration, making work at home, and generally avoiding that fatal look through the wrong end of the telescope which makes things appear so small? Why not forbid all loose talk about people being "hard up"? Why not fine a man very heavily for saying he is "hard up" unless he can prove he is hungry?

Is not more drastic action now required in our hour of trial than was the case in the war days? Then the Imperial peril was obvious, but now our present perilous position is veiled.

I base my opinion in respect of all classes "hanging together" on a sound military principle. In desperate situations in action soldiers "hang together," that is why "Pompey" Green came back for me at the Tugela. We recognize there must be weak links in the long human chain, and we realize the necessity of the self-imposed duty of strengthening the weakest links. Is it not better to "hang together" now in the British way than to bring the risk of "hanging together," say a hundred years hence, on lamp-posts—in the Moscow manner?

In the spring of 1924 an event happened which, though very personal to me, proved to be of much consequence to the country, bringing out, as it did, the dangers of bureaucratic control.

Most people hoped that the Irish controversy had been settled once and for all, and that the rancour of petty spite and jealousies had been forgotten. Not so with Mrs. Charlotte Menzies. In order, among other things, to make money, she wrote a book anonymously (which was described by Captain Basil Hall, R.N., as the effort of a kitchen-maid, he not knowing who the authoress was!), in which she

libelled me greatly in connection with my administration of the Irish Police Division, which I raised and commanded for six months in 1920 and 1921. After the identity of the authoress had been established a writ was issued in the usual way. It became evident, after the establishment of identity, that there was more in it than met the eye, as one evening a man made his appearance who claimed to be her son, and also to have served under my command in Ireland. I did not remember him, but his statements were obviously true, in so far as serving under my command was concerned. Hearing this, my wife insisted on his being searched for arms. The reason for his intrusion into our privacy was that he wished me to go round at once and accept an apology from his mother, who was blaming him for the book ever having been written. He also expressed great friendship for me and high regard for my soldierly qualities. He had, according to his own statement, served in "A" Company, and had been transferred later to the Dublin Castle Propaganda Department, which latter fact rendered him liable to the deepest suspicion. Of course I referred him to my solicitor, as I do not keep dogs and bark myself.

It having been definitely established that Mrs. Charlotte Menzies was the same individual who had organized "Black and Tan" propaganda parties for the Diehard reactionaries, things became very interesting. My solicitor served an order for the production of documents on General Tudor, at the Army and Navy Club, who replied that he had none, which was probably correct, as later Mrs. Charlotte Menzies, in addition to producing some astounding documents in her affidavit of documents, all of which she swore on oath she had received from "officials" (her son had been an "official" in Dublin Castle), produced some of my personal correspondence with General Tudor. Her solicitors, Messrs. Lumley & Lumley, had sent to make inquiries at an address at which my first wife had resided for a short time when I was serving under General Tudor,

which address could only have been obtained from a most private letter written by my wife, which I had discussed with General Tudor and left with him. After this Messrs. Lumley & Lumley withdrew from the case.

Brigadier-General Allan Wood, who had been my second in command and who had, on one famous occasion, signed a lie which was read out in the House of Commons by Mr. Law, told my wife, who tackled him one day at Lords regarding his disloyalty to me, he had declined to give evidence for Mrs. Charlotte Menzies. He dared not.

The case was eventually settled in my favour, Mrs. Charlotte Menzies paying me a sum of money, and agreeing to withdraw the libel complained of and never to repeat it.

There remained the question of the "extraordinary documents" and the connection which had existed between Mrs. Charlotte Menzies, the police and certain Members of Parliament, and Government Departments. As regards the former, Mrs. Menzies produced a document, which she swore on oath was a "copy of the secret record of General Crozier at the War Office." If it was a copy of a secret document at the War Office, the question naturally arose, "How did she acquire it?" It was a most damaging document which had, in fact, been circulated by the Propaganda Department in many directions—*sub rosa*. It was not a true copy of any War Office document, it was a concoction, but from its contents it was obvious that the secrecy of my private and confidential personal file at the War Office had been violated in order to discredit me in the eyes of the world. Matter divorced from its context and twisted is always misleading and unfair.

My solicitor sent a copy of this "secret record of General Crozier" to the War Office for their remarks, at the same time pointing out that I had received the special thanks of the Army Council "for having done all

in my power to bring the war to a successful conclusion." In reply the War Office forwarded a copy of my record of service, and, as regards the concocted document, was non-committal and evasive.

The second "extraordinary document" in Mrs. Charlotte Menzies' sworn file, in so far as filth is concerned, beggars description. It was obviously concocted in Dublin. She swore it was handed to her by officials. I can well believe it. I cannot discuss it here. It was entitled "Notes on General Crozier."

The third "extraordinary document" was in reality a series of inspired letters, purporting to emanate from "A," "C" and "D" Companies of the Auxiliary Division, written after I had resigned, signed by many policemen (the majority of the police had come up against me, individually or collectively, at some time or other), dated from three different parts of Ireland, on or about the same date on the same subject, stating that I had incited policemen to commit murder. There was no truth in this assertion. Menzies, the son, had served in "A" Company. "B" Company, which refused to sign or participate, was raised and commanded by me, and subsequently by Major Conlan of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, for whom I had obtained permanent and pensionable employment in the R.I.C.

As regards the concocted alleged War Office document, the authorities took the view that they would not discuss it with me, while the civil case was *sub judice*, a ruling conveyed to me from the Adjutant-General and Military Secretary through General Sir John Shea, under whom I had served in Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry, and who was a great friend of my mother.

In the meantime an important link in the chain had been established which connected Mrs. Charlotte Menzies with the Irish Police, and the Irish Police with certain Members of Parliament.

A one-time R.I.C. policeman called Floyd dined with us and narrated, in the presence of witnesses, how he had been sent over to London by the Propaganda Department of Dublin Castle (in which Menzies, the son, was serving) to stay in a flat in London with Mrs. Charlotte Menzies, whom he helped to stage pro "Black and Tan" lectures and meetings in halls and drawing-rooms at which Members of Parliament spoke. During the period he was thus employed he was being paid £1 a day (with certain allowances), in addition to his fare across from Ireland, out of public funds, while some of the expense of the political meetings were also defrayed by the public authorities. Mrs. Charlotte Menzies was, in fact, acting as an agent.

In discussing this individual with Sir Martin Archer-Shee, prior to the settlement of the action, when I showed him some papers, I noticed a peculiar creepy sort of manner which was quite foreign to him, when he asked particularly if he might see the correct War Office record of service, which he scrutinized. He told me it was obvious that someone at the War Office had "broken his trust," and then added that Mrs. Menzies "did not count, as nobody bothered about her," but that "she had been useful." She had been useful in damaging my character. It was obvious from what Floyd told me that certain Members of Parliament were using the Irish Police organization for party purposes, at the expense of the taxpayers, and I regret to say some with whom I had fought shoulder to shoulder in France, against the Germans, were not above taking away my character too in order to assist their partisan cause.

Directly the civil case was settled I asked to see the Adjutant-General at the War Office, an interview being arranged by General Sir William Peyton, who was then Military Secretary, from whom I received the following letter :

6th June, 1925.

MY DEAR CROZIER,—With reference to your letter of the 4th June, asking for an interview with the Adjutant-General, would you please send an official application to his Personal Assistant? You should mention the subject concerning which you desire the interview, and enclose copies of the letters referred to in your letter to me of yesterday's date.

I hope the settlement out of court in your favour has been satisfactory, and that you will have no further trouble in the matter.

Yours very sincerely,

W. E. PEYTON.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL F. P. CROZIER, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.,

3 HOVA COURT,

HOVE, SUSSEX.

The Adjutant-General, Sir Robert Wigham, in whose Corps I had served for a time, knew my mother and step-father well, and treated me with the greatest kindness possible, but told me frankly, pointing upstairs, that the soldiers could do nothing for me on the account of "the — politicians."

General Sir William Peyton confirmed the opinion of the Adjutant-General regarding the politicians, adding that what the Government should do was to recompense me, but that "Governments don't do that!"

After a great deal of delay I received a letter from the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for War, which was an admission of guilt, stating in addition that any copies of the concocted document which might be found in other Government Departments would be called in. But it is known that certain severe disciplinary action was taken against certain people for their complicity in this most diabolical enterprise at the War Office; an affair about

which Sir William Peyton, two years ago, expressed astonishment that there had been no court martial at the War Office. There could not be a court martial without an appalling political scandal.

The following letter written to my mother illustrates the feeling which Sir William Peyton felt in the matter.

18th July, 1925.

DEAR MRS. THORNEYCROFT,—Sir Philip Chetwode sent me on your letter. I took it personally to the Permanent Under-Secretary of State, whose branch is dealing with the matter, and he is giving the case most careful consideration. Throughout I have had the utmost sympathy for General Crozier. He has been the victim of much misfortune. I am sorry my old friend and Chief still remains so ill.

Yours very sincerely,

W. E. PEYTON.

The "old Chief" was General Thorneycroft.

General Sir Philip Chetwode had also been written to by my mother, as he had been at the War Office in 1921. His reply to her, which is given below, shows the difficulties which the War Office conspirators must have had in order to bring off their political coup. Nobody had ever suggested that a clerk had not been bribed. Sir Philip now realizes that the records were tampered with.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

FARNBOROUGH, HANTS.

15th August, 1925.

DEAR MRS. THORNEYCROFT,—I have no means of influencing the case of Brigadier-General Crozier, now I am not at the War Office. I have sent your letter to the Military Secretary. I remember the case when I was at the War Office, but I resent the imputation that his

records at the War Office were "tampered with" while I was Military Secretary.

No one but myself and one D.M.S. had access to any confidential records, and unless a clerk was bribed it would be impossible to see a man's papers even for five minutes except by order of the Army Council.

Yours very sincerely,

PHILIP W. CHETWODE.

At this period I often accompanied my stepfather, Major-General Thorneycroft, for drives in his motor-car, or for walks beside the chair in which he was wheeled. Naturally he was interested in this extraordinary War Office political-police case, and often asked me questions or gave advice. "What does Guinness want?" "What is at the back of it all?" "Oh, Tudor, he was weak!" "Why don't you see Carson or Craig? I will steam you up the river to him," he would say, and finally he said, "Write to Plumer," which I did. The following is the reply which I received from my late Army Commander, who knew me well. He could do nothing.

22 ENNISMORE GARDENS, S.W.7.

13th July, 1925.

DEAR CROZIER,—I have just received your letter of the 12th.

I am afraid I cannot intervene in your case. It must rest with those under whom you were serving at the time.

Please give my kindest remembrances to your mother and the General.

Yours sincerely,

PLUMER.

In dealing with certain Government Departments in 1925, in connection with this sordid case, I found that a

subtle element of blackmail had crept in. The civil case against Mrs. Charlotte Menzies had not then been settled. I received two well-meant and kindly messages, one from General Sir John Shea, through my mother, and another from Major-General Tom Cubitt, while lunching with him at "The Senior" and afterwards in a letter. The former said in effect, "He has a good case against the woman, tell him not to push the War Office, you never know," while the latter, whose brother, Sir B. Cubitt, was a leading civil servant at the War Office, advised me to "Go slowly with the War Office." Why? The Departments were apparently willing to sacrifice the woman in the case, but however little or great the sin of the one might have been, the original and greater sin was undoubtedly to be found in the collective political irrectitude of a criminal kind which lent itself readily to *breaking its trust* (the italicized words are Sir Martin Archer-Shee's) *sub rosa*, in Government Departments, for ulterior motives. I have never been blackmailed by an individual, but if such a thing were to happen, I should undoubtedly telephone for a policeman. In dealing with a Public Department things are rather different, and in this case I did what I considered to be the nearest thing to calling in the aid of Robert, I put the matter in the hands of the Public Prosecutor and Attorney-General. That they failed was not my fault.

The Home Office (acting for the defunct Irish Office) had owed me over £60 for travelling and detention expenses incurred in Dublin in 1921, when I was a Crown witness. They refused to pay, and did not pay till 1926, thereby causing me to get into debt. In 1921 I put in a claim for firearms and ammunition belonging to me, which had been "lost" by the police in Ireland, into whose custody the effects had been delivered, in accordance with the law then in force. They refused to pay and did not do so till 1924. As has been already stated, in 1921 I was

owed £1,500 for injuries received at Naas. Obtaining no redress, a friend of mine placed the matter before Lady FitzAlan, the wife of the last Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, with the result that I obtained an *ex. gratia* payment of £250 in November, 1921, which I accepted, through my solicitor, "without prejudice." I am still owed £1,250. I have been told that portion of my grant for injuries was unlawfully and secretly deducted on account of quasi-public money appropriated by Captain Macfie, for which I was in no way responsible.

My wife and I are persevering people, and to our aid came our oldest friend, Lieutenant-Colonel Kenneth Foss, late Indian Army, who went thoroughly into the matter of the whole conspiracy, with the result that a letter was drawn up and sent to Mr. Baldwin, as we knew him to be an honest man. Lieutenant-Colonel Foss's efforts can never be repaid by us, but still even he could not penetrate the veil of departmental expediency. My wife saw Mr. Baldwin's Principal Private Secretary, Sir Ronald Waterhouse, at 10 Downing Street, relative to the foul attack on her character by the Propaganda Department, which horrified him in no small measure, as did also her solicitor. I received the following letter from Sir Ronald, which speaks for itself. No reply has ever been received. All that was being done was to conceal facts and protect influential personages.

10 DOWNING STREET,

WHITEHALL, S.W.1.

2nd April, 1926.

DEAR SIR,—I have to acknowledge your further letter of the 31st ultimo.

Unfortunately the delay in replying to your letter of the 27th February is occasioned by the reason of its subject being the concern of more than one Department, and in

these circumstances, as you will appreciate, it would serve no useful purpose to offer an incomplete reply.

I am, very faithfully yours,

RONALD WATERHOUSE.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL F. P. CROZIER, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.

This letter reminds me of a story I heard from the lips of an ex-Russian officer in the Baltic. In the old Russian days an edict had been issued to the effect that in future, instead of three officers signing indents for the requirements of the Army, five should sign. A British diplomat asked a Russian editor if this would cause much extra confusion. "Dear no!" was the reply. "Five thieves instead of three!"

In this case which had been submitted to the only possible neutral man, the Prime Minister, there was "more than one Department."

Eventually my wife and I saw Sir Archibald Bodkin, the Director of Public Prosecutions, with a view to charges of conspiracy being laid against certain people, while I saw Sir Douglas Hogg, who was at the time Attorney-General. I believe the former to have done his very best for us, but the weight of political power was too much against him; however, he did have the original vile concocted documents, which had been produced by Mrs. Menzies, destroyed. The latter, admittedly, was in a difficult position. The Attorney-General received a memorandum from Sir Archibald "couched in sympathetic terms" towards us, and there the matter remained. True copies of all the infamous documents now destroyed by order of the Director of Public Prosecutions are in existence.

During inquiries which had to be made before Mrs. Menzies' case was settled, it was discovered that Mr. Walter Guinness had been sent a telegram by an Irish Police officer, congratulating him on an attack he had made

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on me in the House of Commons. Whether he ever received the telegram, or what its source of information was, is another matter. As I was anxious to discuss this and other matters with Mr. Guinness, I asked his wife's brother-in-law, Brigadier-General Hon. Charles Heathcote-Drummond-Willoughby, late Scots Guards, who had commanded a brigade in the 40th Division at the same time as I commanded a brigade in the same Division, to endeavour to arrange a meeting. He very kindly tried his best, with the result that I was asked to put certain matters in writing for Mr. Guinness, which I did, as I thought, with a view to a frank discussion. Instead I received a solicitor's letter from Messrs. Withers & Co., of which firm Mr. Withers, who was a Member of Parliament, was a Majority-Commissioner on the Savidge Inquiry, and has since been knighted.

HOWARD HOUSE,
4 ARUNDEL STREET,
STRAND, LONDON, W.C.2.

11th December, 1925.

DEAR SIR,—Our client, Mr. Walter Guinness, has handed us your letter to him of the 10th December, 1925, and has asked us to state that as he has no recollection of the matter to which you refer, it is quite useless for him to arrange an interview.

Yours faithfully,
WITHERS & Co.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL F. P. CROZIER, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.,
3 HOVA COURT,
HOVE, SUSSEX.

It will be noted that Mr. Guinness does not deny my contentions, he merely "doesn't remember." Such lack of memory does not come well from an ex-Minister of the Crown. The farmers of England required all the brains

and powers of memory they could get, at the Board of Agriculture, in their difficult days.

Dozens of questions have been asked and answered in the House of Commons between 1921 and 1926 in regard to this astounding case of political intrigue and opportunism, the latest answer having been characterized by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald as a "dishonest excuse." Sir Laming Worthington-Evans, who has had much to do with the handling of this affair, in his official capacity, as he held the same position at the time as he held in 1921, when I was being attacked by Mr. Guinness and Sir Hamar Greenwood, in the House of Commons, had, during the winter of 1926-27, to withdraw and apologize for what my solicitor considered to be a libellous statement contained in a letter to Mr. Herbert Williams, M.P., who was a member of Mr. Baldwin's Government. The War Secretary wrote to Mr. Williams and stated that my services had been "dispensed with" from the R.I.C. I gave him forty-eight hours in which to withdraw the statement in writing to Mr. Williams, the alternative to which was to be a writ for libel. He complied with my suggestion, sending me a copy of his letter to Mr. Williams, in which he pleaded what was tantamount to "ignorance" regarding the formula.

Colonel Foss considered that the final and constitutional course of appeal to the King in regard to the purloining of my papers at the War Office was open to me, and even suggested that I should submit a humble petition to His Majesty that my appointment to his three orders of chivalry should be cancelled as being, on the face of things, a farce, but I disagreed for the following reason. The final constitutional method of appeal had broken down, as the prayer would have had to be submitted to His Majesty by the Secretary of State for War, whose answers to questions in the House of Commons had been considered unsatisfactory by some.

As the War Secretary was, in my opinion, precluded from advising His Majesty in this matter, I approached the Prime Minister. My point of view was confirmed by the answer of the Private Secretary to His Majesty, to whom I wrote on the subject, as I desired to avoid having to submit my petition through the Secretary of State for War, or any Government Department.

In the following winter, on 18th November, 1927, to be precise, it became Lord Cushendun's turn to repeat the hardy libellous annual—*sub rosa*, of course—from his Government office. The following letter written to Mr. Smithers, M.P., speaks for itself. At first I thought of taking action against Lord Cushendun (better known as Ronny McNeill), but on reflection I came to the conclusion that the best course would be to leave his letter to the judgment of his fellow-men. He was prejudicing my chances of employment.

TREASURY CHAMBERS,

WHITEHALL, S.W.1.

18th November, 1927.

DEAR SIR,—Lord Cushendun has asked me to thank you for your letter enclosing a letter from General Crozier. He regrets that he has no means of obtaining employment for him by the League of Nations, whose Secretary-General at Geneva enrols his own staff, but he thinks that what General Crozier is desirous of obtaining is employment by the League of Nations Union in this country. I am therefore to return his letter.

Lord Cushendun asks me to add that if his memory serves him right he thinks that General Crozier's activities in Ireland are less likely to recommend him to Lord Cecil than they would to himself.

Yours very truly,

NEVILLE BUTLER,

Private Secretary.

Lord Cushendun did not apparently understand Lord Cecil, which is not to be wondered at.

And now the closing stage of a narrative concerning under fifty years of strenuous life has arrived, though there is still much to be done, and I hope sufficient energy with which to help to do it. The efforts for world peace and education of the young in matters appertaining to the subtle dangers which always exist in alcohol when used as a beverage, claim my time. Both these Imperial problems (for such they are) can and must be solved by the rising generation. They can profit by our experiences and failures. They can reap the benefits of our glorious past. The call is as strong, and quite as necessary, to-day as when Nelson sent out his famous signal: "England expects that every man this day will do his duty."

CONCLUSION

LESSONS TO BE LEARNT

It would indeed be an impertinence for me if I were to suggest that I could teach the British Empire a lesson; rather is the boot on the other leg, for I can, and do, profit from Imperial lessons at least once a day when I read my *Morning Post*, *Times* and *Express*. I fear I could not profit much if I were to read only one of these papers, but, by making myself *au fait* with the points of view expressed by all three, I feel that, in the end, I may hope for a mind of my own—not otherwise. But we can profit by experience.

In my case I deduce from a somewhat active life, hampered by false conclusions drawn from unsound doctrines, impossible formulæ and faulty example, that the child, youth or maiden of to-day is better taught, and therefore has a better chance than was the case forty or fifty years ago. Out of my experiences six big facts protrude which “arrest” me almost every day and make me think.

We all should think more. My chief quarrel with my own class, if such it must be called, is that the majority of those composing it do not think at all. I can understand a great landlord being a Conservative, because he has a great deal to conserve, and a miner being a Socialist, because he hasn’t (although I might not agree with either on these points), but for the life of me I cannot see why they cannot both see eye to eye in the matter of the peace of the world, which concerns them both. Yet often they won’t, because they don’t think and therefore do not know.

I speak a great deal for the League of Nations Union, as I believe in the absolute security of my country before anything else, and the futility of war for gaining “just” purpose. I fight if I’m attacked, and if any other country

dares to lift a finger to harm mine I'm in the fight at once, but I do believe the League way to be the better and safer way. During my travels for the Union I stay in all kinds of houses. In Devonshire recently I was put up by a delightful country gentleman and his charming wife. He was Lord of the Manor and therefore, rightly, carried much weight locally. To the astonishment of some, he came to my meeting and listened. He would not come on the platform; he would not join the local branch. Needless to say, he was an excellent host. When I was thanking him for his hospitality he said, "I'm your friend." "Well," I replied, "why not be the first President of your new village branch?" "Oh, no," he said, "that's impossible, it's run by conscientious objectors!" "Well," I replied, "surely if you came in you would run it in your way?" "Yes," he said, "I'd strike the conchies off the list!" My squire friend did not think. He is, and so long as he lives must always be, on the one and only list that counts, with conchies and others alike, I mean—God's list! It is better to convert than dragoon. In France we turned "B" men into "A" men by a system of conversion; they converted themselves, some of them being originally so-called conscientious objectors. Will the squires of England lead the way once more? Will they help to make the League of Nations effective? Their King and Country calls them!

Reader, I ask you to *think*, and to think about six things (there are, of course, dozens more), but these six things you have read about in the pages of my life. Please do not think politically, if you do you will get lost; think imperially with your eye on the main Imperial chance and off that of your own! It pays in the end. Think of Cecil Rhodes, probably the greatest Imperialist we ever had, yet big enough, as well, to endow scholarships for Americans, in order that they might "mix" at the Varsity and subscribe £10,000 (I believe that was the figure), to help Parnell to acquire Home Rule for Ireland, as he *knew* it would help

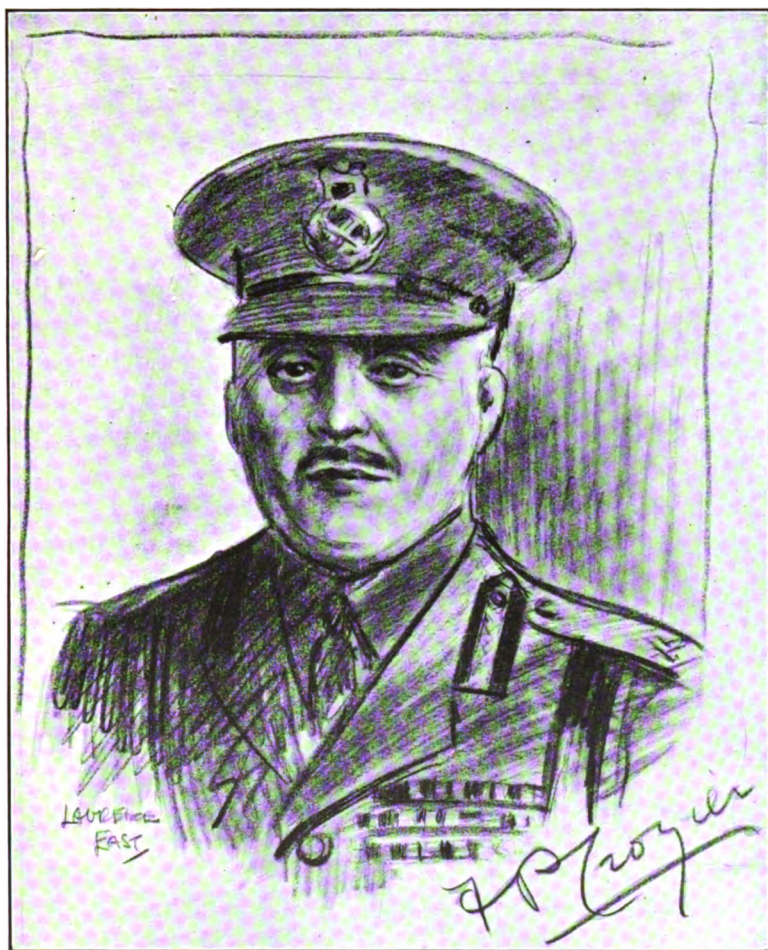
the Empire. Why did he *know*? Because he had *thought*. Have we all thought properly about the ex-service men who saved the country during the dark days of 1914-18? A drowning man will promise anything to be saved. This country when apparently in a similar position promised much. Is it possible that we returned to the normal too quickly after the war? Would it have been wiser had we continued the Spartan rigour of domestic life for, say, twenty years after the war? Would it have been better if constructive work had been found for *all*, and that *all* had agreed to work at an absolute minimum wage compatible to the requirements of a Spartan period; Cabinet Ministers, Admirals of the Fleet and Field-M Marshals consenting to work for, say, £400 a year? I believe the effect of such a gesture from the top would have been incalculable. The question is, "is it now too late?"

My seven years of study of the masses and the sheltered classes has produced in me an uncomfortable feeling that all is not well with our outlook. Collectively, I fear our eyes are on "the main chance," while our ears decline to listen to the old-time question or the application of its answer, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Ex-service men do not want to be "kept," but they want the standards of war, in so far as ability to live is concerned, applied to the period now blackened by the war which they won. If all was well with our mentality, if the sheltered class was thinking right, they should now lack peace of mind and ability to sleep quietly in their beds at night.

The six things I want thought centred on are briefly:

1. *The subtle danger which always lurks behind alcohol when consumed as a beverage.* The danger should be explained in the homes and schools of old England. There is no such thing now as "drinking like a gentleman." "Getting drunk" is bad enough, "getting ill and more ill and more ill" (and not perhaps knowing it) is much worse.



THE AUTHOR, FROM A CRAYON DRAWING BY LAURENCE EAST.

2. *The power of the Liquor Trade must be curbed.* It is not out for the good of the Empire; it is only out for dividends. It does not contribute to taxation; the consumers of alcohol do that, as "the Trade" passes on the duty. This power dominates Parliament and policy and regulates our affairs, with its eyes on "the main chance." Guinness's famous brewery is now in the Irish Free State, it used to be in the United Kingdom; yet, even without it, the power of "the Trade" in England and Scotland is immense.

3. *In the event of another great war*, which God forbid, the full power of the Armies of the Empire will be again incomplete unless the training of men is conducted on scientific lines. There is no use combing the country for men, sending them overseas, and straining every nerve to get them there, unless a proper psychological department at G.H.Q. makes it possible for selected men to train those who are men slightly below "A" category, so that the best that is in them can be drawn out and used for the benefit of the British. Highbrow strategy and tactics are of no account, if that simple little thing about which few appear to know is not taken in hand at the same time. I mean "the making of the best soldiers out of the worst materials." Owing to this neglect during the war, we lost incalculable strength when we needed it most. With this, of course, goes the question of promotion of the unfit and promotion by favouritism, in war.

4. *Everybody wants World Peace.* The valour of simple men such as has been described by me in these pages, in a manner quite incommensurate to the sacrifice as made and heroic fortitude endured, will be of no avail, and our pledges to the dead will have been broken, unless we really see to it that war is made impossible. There are things in life which are "not done." War should be one of them. I am told by some very capable, thoughtful people that war is in the nature of things, and that therefore it must be. That is a lazy way of taking the line of least resistance,

which is generally the wrong line. War, and thinking in terms of war, is a very bad habit. Most of us like to change our bad habits, and some succeed. It is time we changed this one. If we do not do so before a generation grows up which knows nothing about war, save its glamour (which has now greatly departed), we shall have another war in a hundred years' time or less. I am thinking of our country then and not now. A glance at history will demonstrate the fact that war, on a grand scale, comes about every hundred years, because a generation has then grown up which knows nothing of its horrors or consequences. There never was a greater fallacy than the old slogan which was killed in 1914, "To ensure peace prepare for war." Moral disarmament must precede any material reduction of armaments on a large scale.

5. *Control by bureaucracy must cease.* These pages are full of intrigues, malpractices, ventures of expediency and the like, by men out for "the main chance," at the expense of their country. Things are worse since the war. The law relative to the prosecution of the Crown by a subject requires alteration. It is ridiculous that the head of a Department should be able to deny the right of evidence to an aggrieved subject, when that very Department is or may be on trial. Our civil servants are the best in the world, but they are only human, as are members of the fighting services, and as such they should be treated. How is this to be done? That is a very difficult question to answer. The whole question is mainly one of morality. Morality cannot be created by Act of Parliament, more particularly when Cabinets and Members of Parliament tell inexactitudes to cover faults, and insist on being told lies by permanent officials to cover failures. Can anyone be sure, after reading these pages, that the notorious Zinovieff letter ever existed? I cannot. Who saw the original? Nobody that we know of. Who produced the copy and when was it produced? An international banker produced the copy

on the eve of a general election! To whom was it sent? An editor! Whether the letter was genuine or not I do not know, but this I do know, the Empire cannot be ruled by trickery.

The General Strike was a grand failure (as it deserved to be), and a dastardly crime committed for ulterior motives on the nation by brutal methods, by those who had their eyes on "the main chance." I do not fear revolution in this country, but if minor troubles come (the General Strike was a mild form of revolution), I fear control by bureaucracy, on the lines embarked upon in Ireland. If "they" attempted to do in England what "they" did in Ireland, it would be a bad day for England. An Englishman's home is his castle, and he will not stand for it being broken into, looted or wrecked by White Guards, out of hand and ablaze with fury. He will not endure mob law or revolver rule by rebels or partisans. It should be enacted that on the first day of revolution, or threatened revolution, all men, women and children of a certain age take the oath of allegiance and wear a colour (the Union Jack), and that all others count as against us. We would then begin to know where we were and act accordingly. I would appoint a Royal Commission to try and solve the answer to the question, "How is bureaucracy to regain its morality?" The other great curse of bureaucracy, and in fact "high society" (about which dear old Connie Ediss used to sing) or "low vulgarity" and all that comes between the two extremes, is that disease called "swollen head," which is also a danger to the country, not because the offensive manner of a swollen-headed man matters much, but because a man with a swollen head acquires a headache if he stoops to conquer. Therein lies the whole secret of Power, Government and Administration. Big-minded practical men find out for themselves. Swollen-headed men press a button and call for papers—and what papers! And there they think their responsibility ends. But there is the other extreme

too, which is also dangerous. One of the nicest bureaucrats I know recently told me he "loved having little Stephen Walsh at the War Office, as he would swallow anything, despite his diminutive size!"

6. *And lastly, the Prime Minister, what about him?* Any Prime Minister of England is almost the greatest man on earth. He must be able to find out things for himself and trust no one for answers. It can be done. Largely to the Prime Minister of England, whoever he may be, it matters not who, I look for the cleansing of bureaucracy. It is a tough job and one that brooks no delay. Whoever the cleanser is to be, he should remember the true saying of Jean Paul Richter: "Man—and the horse-radish—are most biting when grated."

This book is all about "The Glory of England," a wide issue being thereby covered. Readers may ask, "But why the Glory of England, when dealing with your own personal experiences?" "Are you not a bit presumptuous?" another may inquire. My answer is, "No, we are all bound up with the Glory of England, and just how much we collectively help to enhance that Glory, so will we, as a nation, prosper or decline." There is the personal side as well as the national side to be accounted. There is a great deal in the force of example. In the personal sense, for a period, when a young officer, I followed a wrong example till I found out my mistake. In the public sense I was more lucky, as, for a period of years, at a very impressionable stage of my life, I had the advantage of serving under the rule of one of our greatest administrators, Lord Lugard, and it so happened that I tried to bring "Lugard's way" to bear on all administrative problems encountered in later life. That is why, in 1921, in Ireland, as I knew Lord Lugard would never have danced to any such tune of expediency, called from Whitehall or elsewhere, when he was the Sovereign's repre-

sentative in Nigeria (he, too, having taken his oath to administer his trust in accordance with the customs and procedure laid down for the enhancement of the Glory of England)—he would have resigned rather—so I, too, automatically did as I thought my former Chief would have done in Darkest Africa, and as a former British Commander-in-Chief actually did in Ireland itself in 1798.

To those who would say, "You are wrong. You should not have resigned," I merely make reply, "What then would you have done? "

Most Government servants, from the highest to the lowest, are prevented, owing to fear of starvation, loss of promotion or character, from protesting or taking a firm stand, if expediency is wrongly practised to the detriment of their Departments. On the other hand, no good or useful purpose is or ever can be served by the resignation of a senior officer, owing to malpractice, if it is followed by so-called "gentlemanly" silence. If a man has to be put in the impossible position of resigning, owing to some act or omission of misgovernment, and has thus to forfeit his right to live and run the risk of losing his character as well, the least he can do is to bring the facts to the notice of his country. In doing so he is bound to suffer, but it is worth it. Who dies if England live?

The greatest prayer we can ever raise for our country is, "God protect her from methods of expediency," remembering at all times when we sing our National Anthem that it contains the lines,

" Confound their politics
Frustrate their knavish tricks,"

which reminds me of the utterance of a perfectly good, "honest" maiden lady, whose sister plays a very imposing part in local politics. This lady (and her sister) apparently

favour the policy of Government by expediency, as, while discussing my resignation from the R.I.C., she gushed out seriously and apologetically to my wife, "You know, my dear, you could not expect a Government to fall for the sake of one man!" Poor dear! Little did she know the damage her doctrine was to produce, as nobody except partisan politicians wanted any Government to fall at all, but most people (myself included) did want the Government to fulfil its first function—that of Government.

This, and many similar utterances, have brought me to the point of thinking that many politicians favour political action on the lines laid down by that past master in the art of expediency—Caiaphas by name—who, on one famous occasion, said, "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is *expedient* for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not."

That political party which first definitely makes up its mind to abandon the discreditable methods of Caiaphas will rule England unchallenged, and when that day arrives it will be a good day for England and its greater Glory.

I do not believe Cabinet Ministers of any party regard their duties of example, fortitude or self-obligation in the same way as do soldiers, yet they should if theirs is to lead. The late Lord Roberts, a kinsman of my wife, met his death in France, in 1914, because he refused to put on a great-coat when talking to his warriors from India. They were cold, therefore he would be cold. They were dying of exposure; he would also run the risk. He did and died, but not in vain! It is always so in the British Army. In times of joy, danger or sorrow Atkins and his officer always do precisely alike. Not so with civilians in authority. I well remember being taken to a well-known night-club during the war by a prominent man, while on leave, and being told that the club in question could never

be raided, as certain Cabinet Ministers drank there after hours. Let them drink by all means, but, under the circumstances, why not at home? Mr. Churchill is probably different. I am only going on what I know to be true regarding him when he commanded a battalion of the Royal Scots Fusiliers in France. He commanded well because he understood men and "shared."

If I was leader of the Conservative Party, I would stop all official ostentation and party glamour till I had got rid of the unemployed problem. It does not pay to dine in close proximity to dire distress, with hungry noses flattened out against the windows and that "Bisto" aroma in the air.

There are pessimists about who say we are going to the dogs rapidly. Others say we are not as good as we were. When I hear these remarks I often wonder how the speakers think the war was won, even if the peace was lost. To them I would recommend the unfailing tonic of a visit to the changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace during the season, a trip to Epsom on Derby day, or a visit to any race-course to hear the cheers should the King's colours happen to be first past the winning-post. It is in these and similar places that the pulse of England beats, not in Parliament or Whitehall. If we can get back to the "pull together" mentality of 1914-18 and apply it to the problems of peace, so much the better, but to do so is now more difficult owing to the absence of national danger. On the outbreak of a great war people with little or lots to lose are all in the same boat, and act accordingly. In peace-time politicians, people with axes to grind or vested interests to consolidate, and propagandists generally, are too busy trying to score points off each other for their own private or personal ends to think of the country. It is up to the plain people to look after themselves and the country by seeing to it that the governors govern and the servants serve.

There is no use in merely offering destructive criticism. What kind of man must the Prime Minister of England be? These are hard times. These are times when *men* are required, in preference to old women and young children, in matters of leadership of affairs. What kind of *man* would you like to guide the destinies of the Empire, reader? He must have the driving capacity of the thrusting soldier, coupled with the organizing ability of the capable administrator. *He must be able to throw self to the wind.* He must be able to condescend to detail, yet know when to leave it alone. He must know all his Departments of State as well as, if not better than, the Heads of Departments themselves. He must be wedded to no particular partisan party, able to change with the times, be above expediency for personal or partisan gain, and capable of assuming responsibility, particularly in times of distress, and making up his mind quickly at a moment's notice. His power of visualization of Imperial problems, such as migration (the way to our future prosperity), peace, security and economy must be immense. His belief in the Empire (and himself) must be greater than can be imagined. He must be untainted with the Whitehall brush. *Finally, he must be a "sahib" construed in terms of to-day,* not of a hundred years ago, which means that he must be capable of tackling *every* problem from the post-war point of view.

Is there not one *man* outside the House of Commons who is capable of telling the people that this country has had enough "talk" and now requires deeds, not words, and is sick of shilly-shallying and party manœuvres? Is there not one leader who will definitely say this in Parliament, and then call upon the electorate outside the House to follow him, by constitutional means, in order that the King may summon him to form a Government?

The future prosperity of the Empire demands that this shall be so. My close study of the post-war requirements of

the men and women in the street convinces me that something of the Mussolini touch, adapted to our own conditions and temperament, is requisite, in order that worn-out methods shall give way to the pressing needs of our time.

Drastring diseases require drastring remedies.

Where is this superman to be found?

WHERE?

THE END

X

**KRAŠTO APSAUGOS
MINISTERIJA**

UŽSIENIŲ REIKALŲ MINISTERIUI.

Krašto d. 1920 m.

№ 699.

Prašau pranešti telegramu visuomeni-
niui Londone, kad įsteigta bankas **COX & CO**
Londone Peakis šimtas milijonų sterlingų.
Dėl šilingų šalis pensus, dėl išmokėjimo palie-
sutiems iš Lietuvos kariuomenės antrą karinink-
ams alga už vasarį, mėnesį, kompensacijos ir
kolonėlės išlaidų, putent:

- 1) Generolui P.P. Crosier..... 2165. 10. 10.
- 2) Pulkin. J. J. Muirhead... 132 5. 10.
- 3) " P. S. Woods..... 162. 5. 10.

Orderis ant šios sumos išrašytas Tiekimų
Viršininko įpus turėjau prisistatant Užsienio
Reikalų Ministerijai.

Krašto Apsaugos Vice-Ministeris

pas. Majoras M o r k i s.

Už Vancelerijos Viršininką,

pas. kapitonas Savio-Zablockis



Užsienio Reikalų Ministerijai

Užsienio Reikalų Viršininkas

Kapitonas *Savio-Zablockis*

LAST PAY CERTIFICATE FROM THE LITHUANIAN ARMY

KRAŠTO APSAUGOS
MINISTERIJA

L I U D Y M A S .

Kovo 7. d. 1920 m.

N^o 413

Šiuo mi liudijama, kad Lietuvos Katiuo-
menės Inspektorius Generalas Frank P. CROZIER
tarnauja Lietuvos kariuomenėje nuo rugsėjo
19 d. 1919 m. iki Kovo 1 d. 1920 m. ir pa-
liuosenas sulig juo prašyme nuo užimamos
vietos iš tarnystės kariuomenėje, ką parausis
ir antspauda, tvirtinama.



Apsaugos Vice-Ministeris

Majeras *elmy*

Už Kancelerijos Viršininkas

Kapitonas *Švėičius*

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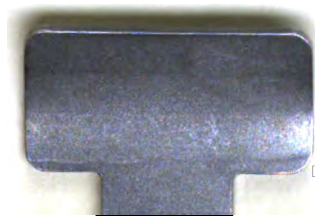
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